

A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION
TX: 006
MAY 1988
£1.25
DM 7.50
US $3.50
the GAMES machine
COMPUTER & ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT
BABYFACE BATTLES!
AN EXCLUSIVE FROM AMERICA
Nolan Bushnell's latest techno-venture unveiled!
MSX II POWERPLAY
USAS & F1-SPIRIT
GROW YOUR OWN RADIO
The airwaves could be yours – we tell you how!
BEHIND THE BULLETIN
TGM visits Bulletin 1000 to see how those telly ads are made
IT'S A CRIME!
To miss out on Playing By Mail
STEAM COMPUTERS
New hi-tech train sets
WIN AN AMIGA & COLOUR MONITOR!
PAGES OF THE LATEST GAMES
AMIGA ATARI ST AMSTRAD CPC/PCW
PC COMPATIBLES MSX II
COMMODORE 64/128
MSX
TGM
05
0 74470 72670 8

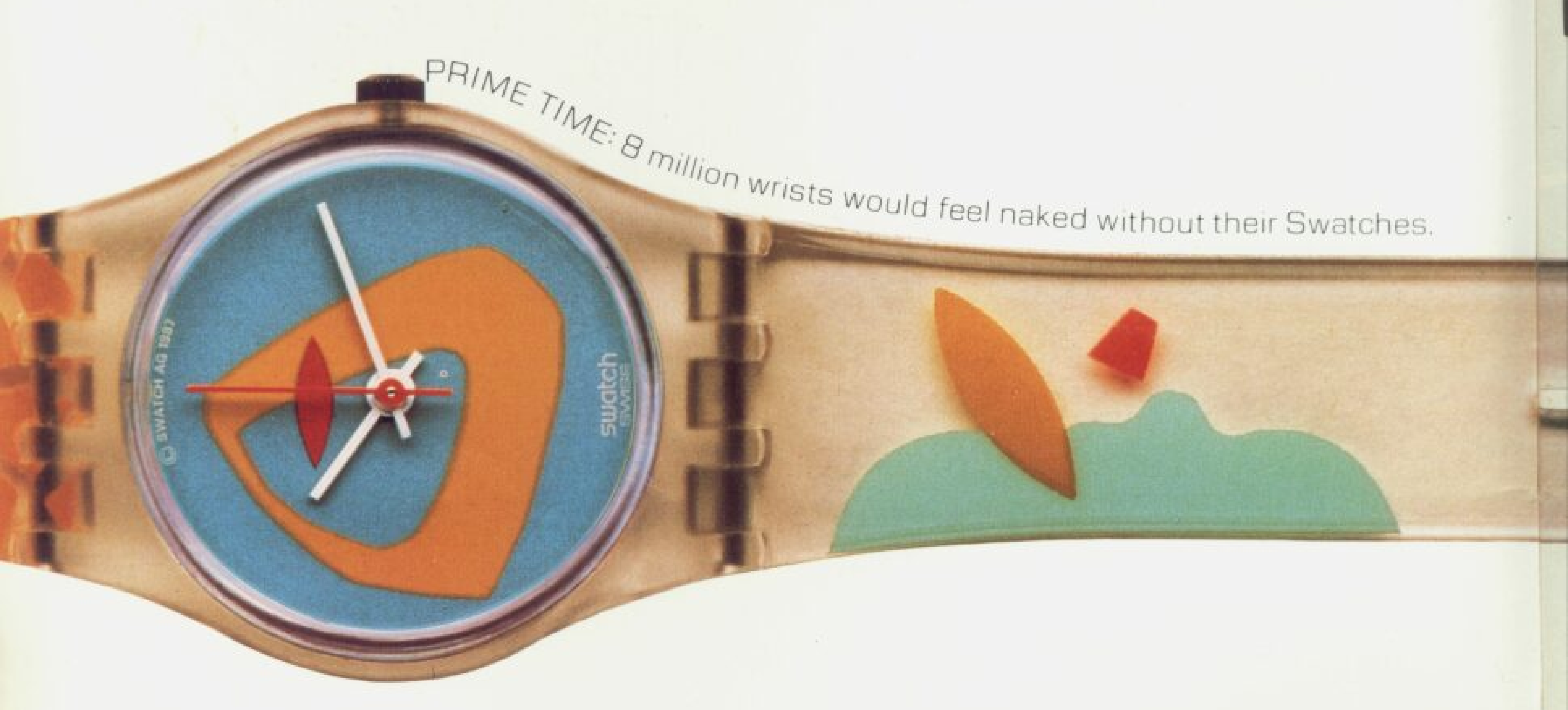
COKE IS IT: Over 350 million servings of Coke are drunk every single day worldwide.

Coca-Cola

Coke

REGISTERED TRADE MARKS

COCA-COLA' AND 'COKE' ARE REGISTERED TRADE MARKS WHICH IDENTIFY THE SAME PRODUCT OF THE COCA-COLA COMPANY.



COKE FROM COCA-COLA
SHOES FROM TIMBERLAND
WATCH FROM SWATCH
LIVE!CASH FROM MIDLAND

Whether you're going into town for a bite to eat or a look round the shops, there's one thing you can't afford to be without.

A Midland LIVE!Cash Card.

You can use it at any Midland AutoBank to get to your money 24 hours a day. 7 days a week. And as long as there's a minimum

CASH IN A FLASH: Midland LIVE!Cash can be used at over 3,000 cash dispensers throughout the UK.

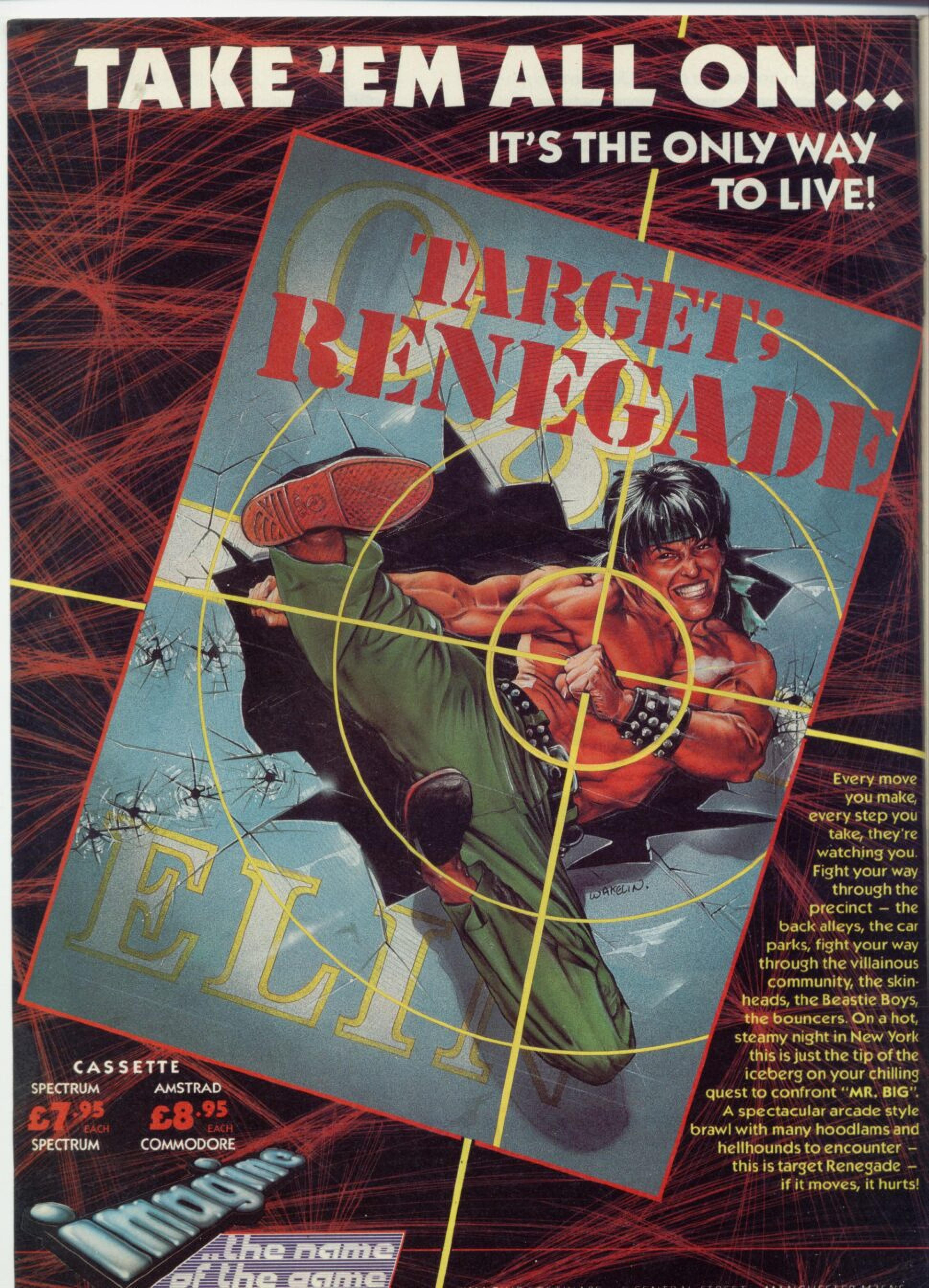
STEPPIN' OUT: Rugged shoes that sell a staggering 2 million pairs a year.

balance of £20 in your account, you'll earn a good rate of interest.

If you are aged 14-20, you can open a LIVE!Cash account.

Just call in at your nearest Midland Bank and fill in an application form. Or call free on 0800 400 469 for written details.




TAKE 'EM ALL ON...
IT'S THE ONLY WAY
TO LIVE!
TARGET; RENEGADE
ELITE
WAKELIN.
Every move you make, every step you take, they're watching you. Fight your way through the precinct – the back alleys, the car parks, fight your way through the villainous community, the skinheads, the Beastie Boys, the bouncers. On a hot, steamy night in New York this is just the tip of the iceberg on your chilling quest to confront "MR. BIG". A spectacular arcade style brawl with many hoodlams and hellhounds to encounter – this is target Renegade – if it moves, it hurts!
CASSETTE
SPECTRUM
£7.95 EACH
SPECTRUM
AMSTRAD
£8.95 EACH
COMMODORE
imagine
..the name of the game



Editor: Oliver Frey
Assistant Editor: Nik Wild
Software Coordinator: Richard Eddy
Staff Writers: Robin Hogg, Stewart Wynne
Editorial Assistant: Frances Mable
Photography: Cameron Pound, Michael Parkinson (Assistant)
Contributors: Jon Bates, Robin Evans, John Gilbert, Robin Candy, Mark Caswell, Mel Croucher, Roger Kean, Marshal M Rosenthal (America), Rob Steel, John Woods

Editorial Director: Roger Kean
Production Controller: David Western
Art Director: Markie Kendrick
Design & Layout: Wayne Allen, Yvonne Priest, Melvin Fisher
Pre-Print Manager: Jonathan Rignall
Reprographics/film planning: Matthew Uffindell, Nick Orchard, Ian Chubb, Robert Millichamp

1/2 King Street, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1AQ ☎ 0584 5851

Advertisement Manager: Roger Bennett
Sales Executive: Andrew Smales
Assistant: Jackie Morris
☎ (0584) 4603 **OR** (0584) 5852

MAIL ORDER
Carol Kinsey
SUBSCRIPTIONS
Denise Roberts
PO Box 20, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB

Typeset by the **Tortoise Shell Press**, *Ludlow*. Colour origination by **Scan Studios**, *Wallace Road, London N1*. Printed in England by **Carlisle Web Offset**, *Newtown Trading Estate, Carlisle, Cumbria CA2 7NR* – a member of the BPCC Group. Distribution by **COMAG**, *Tavistock Road, West Drayton, Middlesex*.

COMPETITION RULES
The Editor's decision is final in all matters relating to adjudication and while we offer prizes in good faith, believing them to be available, if something untoward happens (like a game that has been offered as a prize being scrapped) we reserve the right to substitute prizes of comparable value. We'll do our very best to despatch prizes as soon as possible after the published closing date. Winners names will appear in a later issue of THE GAMES MACHINE. No correspondence can be entered into regarding the competitions (unless we've written to you stating that you have won a prize and it doesn't turn up, in which case drop Frances Mable a line at the PO Box 10 address). No person who has any relationship, no matter how remote, to anyone who works for either Newsfield or any of the companies offering prizes, may enter one of our competitions.

COVER DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION BY OLIVER FREY

MAY 1988

THIS ISSUE . . .

FEATURES

PROVE YOU'RE THE BEST!
Final chance to enter for the first National Computer Games Championships
PAGE 26

BATTLE BETWEEN PROGS
TGM's American correspondent, Marshal M Rosenthal, reveals Nolan Bushnell's latest exciting hi-tech robo-toys from Axlon
PAGE 29

DOUBLE-O'S BACK IN TOWN
John Gilbert reports on how computers have puffed fresh life into the steam train-set
PAGE 34

NAILING BULLS TO THE DOOR
Robin Hogg goes behind the scenes at Bulletin 1000, the people who help sell computer games via tellies
PAGE 85



WEE JOBBIES
Mel Croucher investigates the murky pasts of famous software people and asks: 'How did you get started?'
PAGE 23

THE GAMES MACHINE QUESTIONNAIRE
Your opportunity to tell us about TGM – use it, PLEASE!
PAGE 95

GROW YOUR OWN RADIO
A broadcasting revolution is imminent thanks to a new generation of computer-clever radios and a relaxation of broadcasting strictures. Mel Croucher explains . . .
PAGE 102

IT'S A CRIME!
The TGM crew take on KJC's Play By Mail game in a bid to explain how the system works
PAGE 107

REGULARS

READERPAGE
How you feel about what, and why
PAGE 7

NEWS
TGM Bulletins (not quite 1000)
PAGE 9

INFODESK
More answers on technical queries
PAGE 12

PREVIEWS
Richard Eddy reveals Software Studios's latest plans for *Karnov* and *Afterburner*, and many more early glimpses
PAGE 15

REVIEWS
27 pages of the latest 8- and 16-bit releases, plus MSX II
PAGE 37

GETTING ADVENTUROUS
Rob Steel investigates crime, space piracy and comedy
PAGE 89

GOING OVERBOARD
Where No Vultures Fly – grisly board fun, plus boardgame news
PAGE 91

FANTASY GAMES
John Woods plays a Nordic RPG bid and indulges in gruesome reading from Harn
PAGE 105

MERCY DASH
Robin Evan's anti-heroine gets two pages to crucify Newsfield's recent Computer Arena software conference
PAGE 108

MUSIC MATTERS
Two astonishing utilities for the Atari ST may herald the music performer's equipment of the future, says Jon Bates
PAGE 111

ENDPIECE
Mel's Trivia Quiz
PAGE 114

WIN!

AN AMIGA & MONITOR
Third of our computer giveaways. Don't miss out!
PAGE 27

OMNIBOTS ARE GO!
Tomy robots and copies of GO!'s *Bionic Commandos* are the prizes!
PAGE 80

IT'S THE FLINTSTONES!
Unique boxer shorts, videos and games mark the launch of GrandSlam's great *Flintstones* game
PAGE 83

SIERRA ADVENTURES
Win the entire 16-bit Sierra On-Line adventure range!
PAGE 94

TGM 007 (June) is on sale at all good newsagents from May 19. Sales have increased dramatically since TGM 003, so order from your newsagent now or you may miss out!

READERPAGE

Concern about the question of which 16-bit computer to purchase – Atari ST or Amiga – and, indeed, which is the best, is still foremost in THE GAMES MACHINE readers' minds. But first – a bit about the PC Engine. We want your letters because it's the best form of feedback from you, so write to READERPAGE, THE GAMES MACHINE *PO box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.*

PC ENGINE

In TGM004 we incorrectly implied that the PC Engine – new wonder machine from Japan – was part of the Nintendo range. TGM reader Shintaro Kanaoya, who provided valuable input to our article on the Nintendo Family Computer in TGM001, wrote to us with more details . . .

The PC Engine is built by NEC. It has absolutely nothing to do with the Nintendo console, and, as far as I know, Nintendo software is not compatible with it.

As to how it compares with the ST and Amiga (as one Readerpage writer has asked), it has an 8-bit custom chip, simultaneous playing of six sounds, and up tp 512 colours on screen. It measures about 14 x 13 centimetres by 4 centimetres high, and it retails in Japan for about £100, with games costing about £20. All the games come on the Sega-type card and can be up to the 2 mega level.

Future add-ons: one will allow the use of a CD player, there will be an LCD colour portable display, keyboard additions, personal computer applications and possibly a telephone connection.

It all looks good, but I'm waiting for confirmation of rumours that Nintendo are releasing a 16-bit Super-Nintendo . . .
Shintaro Kanaoya, London SW15

Thanks for the information! Shintaro also tells us that* Soko-Ban *(reviewed TGM005) loosely translates as 'Warehouse Guard'. So now you know!

NO 8-BIT ATARI

Dear Games Machine
I would like to ask you why you have nothing in your magazine about the Atari 8-bit. You seem to be all for the Spectrum, Commodore and Atari ST but if you want to compete with other multi-user magazines, I would advise you to start reviewing games for the Atari 8-bit.

I have bought all your issues just in case there is something about the Atari, but sadly nothing. I don't suppose you even have an Atari 8-bit computer.

I have read in the letter pages that MSX users say that there are 200,000 users but Atari has more users than that. I know you won't print this letter but I just wanted to tell you what I thought.

Hopefully I will be seeing more of the Atari 8-bit in future editions.
Allan Portor, Lincolnshire

Sorry to disappoint you, Allan, but Atari 8-bit games are almost entirely budgets and compilations these days, and as you may have noticed, THE GAMES MACHINE doesn't review 8-bit budget games. Apart from which, there is almost nothing new for the Atari 8-bit any more, and other multi-user mags only give it passing coverage from time to time. As a matter of fact, we have several 8-bit Ataris around, because – like the next writer (who backs up why TGM doesn't cover it) – most people round the TGM office think it's a great machine.

16 MILLION COLOURS

Dear Games Machine
Reading Jason Shipman's letter in TGM**005** (April). I couldn't stop laughing. I am an Atari ST and Atari 800XL owner. The 800XL is one of the best 64K computers of all time, yet to be beaten for its amazing 8-bit graphics capability. It puts the Commodore 64 to shame because of its speed in graphics operations.

But support here was a problem, as nobody released any games for it – so it wasn't (isn't) very popular. However, on the hardware side of things, it is an outstanding machine, and it has lot of peripherals available for it.

Now onto the ST. For the price of only £300 (or less) you can have a computer with a built-in MIDI port and connection to any television or monitor (unlike the Amiga which requires a TV modulator as an optional extra). It not only has the best software support for any 16-bit computer, but also the most amazing hardware as well which put the Amiga's graphics, colours and speed to shame.

What I'm talking about is the new Parsec graphics adaptor, from Elmtech Research, only just released. It has twice the Amiga's resolution (1024 x 1024) with some 16,777,216 colours. It contains a 32-bit, 48 MHz processor running at an incredible 6.125 million instructions per second! Which is 50% faster than the Acorn's Archimedes – let alone the Amiga. With on board RAM, hardware line draw, rectangle and blitter, it costs around £500 to £700 and plugs straight into the back of the ST. If you now calculate the cost, it comes to around £1000. You may well think to yourselves who's going to buy that and there won't be any support if I buy it, but for that price what you'd be getting is a whole 32-bit computer with graphics and speed execution to knock your socks off – and no bull. Also, there will be a lot of support from the company itself who developed it.

Think of it, for just £1000 you can have a computer comparable to other computers costing thousands more – so when you think about it, it really is worth getting an ST just for that; and who knows what the future has in store for the ST?
Nicholas Nicon, Tottenham, London

The Parsec Pixel+ does indeed sound impressive. We'll try and get our hands on one soon for evaluation. And if you want to be impressed by music software development on the ST, try Jon Bates's article on page 111.

INTERESTED IN ART

Dear Games Machine
As a third year in the process of choosing my options, I would be grateful if you could supply me with information about the careers of ART DIRECTOR and DESIGN/LAYOUT PERSON. For instance, which GCSEs might be useful.
Ben Gladman, Ramsgate, Kent

Now that's a different question! First, Art Director. In magazine terms, this is the person responsible for the general appearance of one, or more, magazines. The Art Director liaises with editorial and pre-print production people to ensure the pages are decently designed and conform to the 'house' style, and directs the efforts of the layout people. A Design/Layout (or Paste Up) person is the one who actually, under direction of the Art Director, sticks the actual text and pictures in position on the magazine pages.

That's it very briefly, but an awful lot of skill and self-determining work goes into all the art functions. GCSEs should certainly include Art, with an emphasis on drawing and technical skills. Most people Newsfield employs come from art schools, however, with at least some basic understanding of graphic techniques and reprographics (the use of repro cameras and picture half-tone making).

MORE MSX

Dear Games Machine
I have been buying THE GAMES MACHINE from the 1st edition and will continue doing so as I think it's great. I was glad to see, when I first bought it, that there was a section for MSX users, and I hope that you are going to continue doing so, unlike other less known magazines.

I would also like to tell you about a new magazine I am forming, especially devoted to MSX users. Its contents will include hints, POKES, maps, pen-pal page, postbag page and more, which will be out every month. If anybody would like further information, please send an SAE to: **MSX Magazine, *3 Fouracres Road, Cowgate, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE5 3AS.***
David Harkins, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE5 3AS.

As you can see from the contents of this issue, David, the MSX reviews are back. The reason they disappeared for an issue or two, believe it or not, was that our venerable Phillips machine packed up! It took a while to get hold of a brand new one – a Sony MSX HB-F700D in our case, with built-in disk drive, twin cartridge ports and a word processor on board. And very nicely designed it is too.

DON'T ABUSE ME

Dear Games Machine
I was devastated by reading your article on Industrial Child abuse (TGM**004**, page 21). I am 18, and for years I have worked like a fanatic on my humble Spectrum, determined tp know everything about the Z80 chip. All hours I have studied, even during sleep (my dreams are in binary) my brain continues to sort game-concepts and animated graphics. I have at last reached my goal. All the technical rough edges have been smoothed, enabling me to write a *Uridium* clone if I wanted to, using equal speed and graphics.

I was planning to write a game before the end of May and send it to a fairly well established software house within the budget division. Your article soon put a stop to that! In five minutes flat my dreams (and future plans) were transformed into seemingly naive and positively dangerous ideas. Should I continue programming? Are Mastertronic a load of gits? Does Firebird employ cads? Are Code Masters's Darlings really darlings at heart?

Are there any Spectrum programmers out there with a list of honest and genuine software houses? Please write to this magazine and tell everyone who the good guys are.
Yours, T.C.

Mel's piece was more about the Victorian era of games programming, the days when under-age programmers were stuffed into the workhouse. Things aren't quite as bad today, and the three companies whose names you mention are certainly not among the Scrooge-like taskmasters referred to. But they are businesses, and look for a good deal if they can get it. Who wouldn't? And so should you. Before committing to any offer, try several companies to see what deals can be done. certainly insist on handing nothing over without a contract, and make sure you are getting a reasonable advance on a reasonable level of royalties. On the other hand, don't expect anyone to give you top rates for a first game – after all, the software house is the one that takes the real financial risk.



FALL OUT OVER US GOLD

Dear Games Machine
I write to complain about US Gold's advert on page 57 of TGM**004** for a game they call *The Chernobyl Syndrome*. Quite frankly, I think it is disgusting that a game could be released with this title.

What happened at Chernobyl was a major tragedy and many brave people lost their lives in this most unfortunate accident. To trivialise this by using Chernobyl so prominently in the title of a game is sick.

I am not complaining about the actual game, as computer games are nearly all concerned with mass destruction. US Gold, though, could have chosen a different title for the game rather than naming it after the earth's worst ever nuclear accident, just so that the game would gain more public attention.
Mark Lucas, Stourbridge, W Midlands

If you think seriously about this argument, you would also consider the titles of many games, books, films, plays etc as 'sick' or 'disgusting' because they were about – even if only slightly – incidents that occurred and caused tragedy. The fact is, that once something has become history, no-one really cares any more about its sad human aspect. Was the wargame* Tobruk *disgusting? Many people died in tragic circumstance during the battles for Tobruk in World War II. The point is, when does an incident become history? When everyone who was involved (and survived) has died? If so, then US Gold's game could at least be called insensitive.

WHICH ONE TO BUY?

Dear Games Machine
I have just spent the last eight months saving up £700 to buy an Amiga, I am now unsure which 16-bit to buy.

Over the past few months in TGM, there has been twice as much software reviewed for the ST than the Amiga. I am pretty annoyed about this because it confirms the fact that the ST is selling more units than the Amiga. I am not particularly biased towards the Amiga, but I want to buy the best (not the cheapest) of the two micros.

I'm sorry to say it, but everyone who has bought an ST or Amiga obviously know which one is the best: the Amiga.

As far as I know, the sound and graphics of the ST have been pushed a fair bit, but the Amiga has hardly been touched at all in the sound department and very little in the graphics of recent software.

Now I don't care if the ST sells twice as many units this year than the Amiga because I know thousands of people haven't got the cash for the Amiga. But I was wondering if you, THE GAMES MACHINE, could possibly tell me what you think the future of software for both micros will be like.

I know this is a tough question but I really hope you can give me an answer, as I'll probably buy a compact disc player if my uncertainty continues!
Aiden Donnelly

You're right – it is a tough question! Perhaps the best answer is: 'stay tuned to these pages for the next year!' The ST has sold more units than the Amiga, but then, it has been selling for far longer too. Indications are that, considering the price differential, that it is catching up quite well, and certainly there is more software available now than before. Information we have at THE GAMES MACHINE is that nearly every software house in the UK, and many more abroad, are writing for the Amiga. There will be less upgrade conversions from 8-bit, and less cross-conversions from the ST – rather it is likely to go the other way.

NO RUNWAYS IN AFTERBURNER?

Dear Games Machine
I own a Sega console system and although I am very pleased with the amount of coverage you give it, I am disappointed with the reviews you give it. Let's take *After Burner*. You gave it 60%! The game is BRILLIANT and warrants at least 85%. You obviously didn't play the game. You state it has no continue feature. YES it does. You state there are no runways. YES there are.

I mean to say that your classing such brilliant games as *Rocky*, *Out Run*, *After Burner* etc. with the likes of Spectrum's *Nigel Mansell's Grand Prix*. It's pathetic.

I think we can appreciate that consoles and 16-bits are taking over, leaving C64s, Speccies and CPCs to fade into obscurity like the ZX81. These new breed are obviously for the rich, yuppies or working class individuals as the Software is expensive, but worth it. BE FAIR.
Kenneth Jackson, Edinburgh

For the review of* After Burner*, which was done from a production copy, the game was played fully over several hours to level 12. No runways had appeared at that stage (rather than after every four levels as on the coin-op). Nor was there a continue mission option. We can only suggest you take a photograph of the runways from the screen of your copy and send it to us.

As to the death of the 8-bit market you so gloomily predict, perhaps you should not be too hasty – it's more than alive and well, just take a look at some of the reviews in this issue!

DOWNWARD CONVERSIONS

Dear Games Machine
Well done for producing such an excellent mag.

On the subject of computers (why else would we be reading this mag) I would like to know if you think the 8-bit machines will be swept aside and the top software houses will set their target on the 16-bit machines. I have noticed that over the past few months software houses are programming more and more for the bigger machines. Do you think in the near future 8-bit machines will be out of fashion so to speak? An example of such a company is Melbourne House, which now seems to be producing games mainly for the ST and Amiga.

I am thinking of buying an Atari ST, and I am very impressed with how many games you review on 16-bit. I also enjoy reading Sega reviews. I think to make THE GAMES MACHINE a better mag you should move away to just the 16-bit machines, plus stay with the Sega and Nintendo consoles.

About every mag has a POKE and help page which I think wouldn't harm yours. I think that your mag has more of a serious outlook, and that is needed in a good magazine.
Nigel Roust, Gillingham, Kent

There's no doubt that the majority of British software houses now see the 16-bit machines as the primary objective for games design, but this isn't because they wish to ignore the 8-bit market. For one, it's far too big to ignore, and still makes them far more money than the 16-bit market does. No, the argument seems to be that whereas you can convert down, upward conversions (ie 8-bit to 16-bit) are never as satisfactory. While the public continue buying Spectrum and Commodore games in the quantities they do, the software industry would be foolish to forget it.

We pondered over a hints, tips and POKES section, but decided against it. POKES in the 16-bit area are a non-starter really, and THE GAMES MACHINE is intended to have a far wider scope than other computer magazines, which means a shortage of space for items such as tips. However, we'll see what the outcome of the Questionnaire, printed in this issue, has to suggest.

SOME FINE TUNING

Dear Games Machine
To begin with I say that THE GAMES MACHINE is one of the best magazines around, and my following complaints are only my opinions on how to fine tune.

The magazine as a whole: TGM is about 'Computer and Electronic Entertainment', and as such it is 'Reporting wherever technology is applied to entertainment'. It seems to me that the magazine is much more concerned with computer games than anything else, and that all sorts of other non-electronic subjects are included, such as board games. Not that there is anything wrong with this. A computer magazine with the occasional article about other things is fine, but I would prefer a magazine in which the regular articles have more space, so that computers don't take over. At the moment you seem stuck between the two.

This leads me on to the magazine's organisation. As a computer magazine it is fine, and things are well spread out, but the other articles seem to get lost inside it all. The presentation also is severely lacking when compared to CRASH (and I presume ZZAP! 64). The contents page is very uninteresting and the headings for each section are awful. Take CRASH's Forum pages for instance – there's no doubt what the page contains due to its header. These sort of headings also make it much easier to find certain places at a glance, much more so than the uniform box that TGM uses.

Variety seems to be the difference with all the Newsfield productions. Some sections are loved by all, some by just a few, but they are all valuable and should be kept. The features are generally good (The RARE interview in TGM**004** was excellent), but maybe a cartoon could be included. Mercy Dash is fine as it goes, but an unprejudiced cartoon would also add to the magazine (And no, I don't thing Cutey-Poo is hilarious). This would help to make the magazine less formal, as does Uncle Mel's Trivia Quiz.

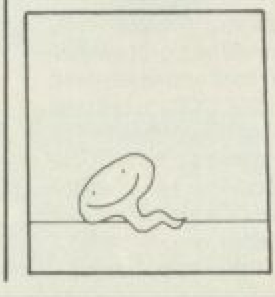
Just who is running THE GAMES MACHINE? Issue 1 saw Graeme Kidd as editor, and Oli was just Art Director, Issues 2 and 3 had Oli as editor, and 4 had Julian Rignall as 'Acting' editor (Oli ill, maybe?). TGM**005** once again returns the position of editor to Oli, or perhaps Oliver as we should now call him.

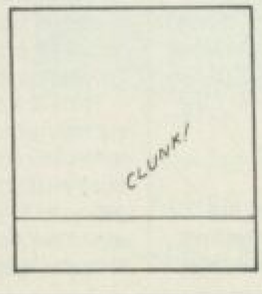
As I said before, these are purely my own views and I think that the only way to find out the thoughts of all the readers is to have a questionnaire like the annual CRASHtionnaire. This always makes interesting reading.

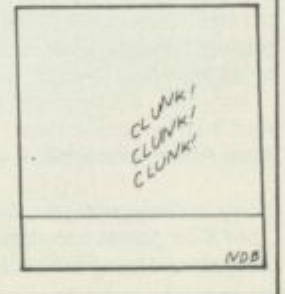
Last words must be devoted to Mel Croucher. To those who don't know his history it's sufficient to say that he wrote possibly the best ever computer game – *Deus Ex Machina* – the only game that was more an experience than a computer game. Keep Mel writing his controversial reports, his quiz, and of course Mercy Dash – he's an invaluable writer.
David Bick, Tewksbury, Glos

We've told Mel again and again not to get his relatives to write to us! Okay, answers: TGM is certainly 70-80% about computers, and non-electronic games come under the umbrella of 'Games Machine' of course. The design is deliberately low-key (though not intended to be uninteresting), but we are always keen to hear what people have to say about it. (Use your influence through this issue's Questionnaire!). Oliver is TGM Editor – he decides what goes in and what doesn't – although he writes nothing for the magazine; he took over from Mr Kidd, but was away on a well-earned holiday throughout TGM004, so Julian Rignall did a caretaking job for him. And finally: Mel is almost TOO wonderful, isn't he?

CUTEY-POO FALLS DOWN THE STAIRS







INTO THE SOFTWARE ARENA

THE first ever British entertainment software conference was held on March 11-13 at the Hotel de France, St Helier, Jersey. Organised by THE GAMES MACHINE's parent, Newsfield Publications, it brought together over 80 top representatives from Britain's leading software houses and distributors. (See pages 108 and 110 for Robin Evans's more irreverent coverage of the event).

The three-day weekend event was designed as an opportunity for software publishers to discuss their common problems and was based around a series of speeches given by invited guests, with question-and-answer sessions after each. The speakers were **Simon Treasure from chart pollsters Gallup, Geoff Grimes**, Marketing Manager Elite Systems, **Mike Blackman**, Project Director Montbuild – the people who organise the PC Show, **Jack Schofield**, editor Computer Guardian and **Dean Barrett**, the new Marketing Manager of Commodore (UK) Ltd.

Much of the discussion revolved around the commonly felt need for a truly representative software publishers' association; one such already exists in the United States, a situation neatly outlined by American **Mark Lewis** of Electronic Arts. But Dean Barrett came in for some criticism for Commodore's past policies of standing off



Incentive's Ian Andrew almost in tears over all the awards for **Driller**

from the software industry. Barrett responded by saying that it was time hardware manufacturers took note of their colleagues in software, and that both sides should talk to each other more, especially when it comes to upgrade developments for existing machines such as the Amiga. He also affirmed that Commodore will continue to make, market and support the Commodore 64/128 machines, laying to rest consistent popular rumours to the contrary.

THE GAMES MACHINE's Mel Croucher was (suitably enough because of his initials) Master of Ceremonies at the Saturday evening gala dinner and presentation of the Newsfield Awards for 1987. The awards are based on votes received from CRASH and ZZAP! 64 magazine readers. The senior awards went to: **Incentive Software** for *Driller* (Best Game – CRASH), **US Gold** for *California Games* (Best Game – ZZAP!), but **Ocean** swept the board with votes for Best Software House of 1987 from both CRASH and ZZAP! readers. A full list of the awards is printed below.

The conference was regarded as succeeding in its aims of bringing influential people within the leisure software industry together and getting them talking. Further conferences are planned.



A rare appearance for Tricia Peters of CCS as she takes the CRASH award for best strategy game – **Vulcan**

Gary Bracey accepts the top award for Ocean – Best Software House of 1987



1987 Newsfield Readers' Awards

FOR ZZAP! 64 MAGAZINE

Best Arcade Conversion BUBBLE BOBBLE Firebird
Best Platform Game BUBBLE BOBBLE Firebird
Best Adventure Game GUILD OF THIEVES Rainbird/Magnetic Scrolls
Best Programmer ANDREW BRAYBROOK Rainbird
Best Game CALIFORNIA GAMES US Gold
Best Strategy Game RUSSIA SSI
Best Advert OUT RUN US Gold
Best Software House OCEAN
Best Shoot-'em-up WIZBALL Ocean
Best Sound Effects WIZBALL Ocean
Best Arcade Adventure LAST NINJA Activision/System 3
Best Graphics LAST NINJA Activision/System 3
State Of The Art Award SHOOT-'EM-UP CONSTRUCTION KIT Outlaw
Best Music DELTA Thalamus
Best Simulation GUNSHIP MicroProse

FOR CRASH MAGAZINE

Best Game DRILLER Incentive
Best Platform Game AU WIEDERSEHEN MONTY Gremlin Graphics
Best Shoot-'em-up ZYNAPS Hewson
Best Arcade Adventure HEAD OVER HEELS Ocean
Best Simulation GUNSHIP MicroProse
Best Sports Game MATCHDAY II Ocean
Best Adventure Game THE PAWN Rainbird/Magnetic Scrolls
Best Strategy Game VULCAN CCS
Most Imaginative Game DRILLER Incentive
Best Graphics DRILLER Incentive
Best Music TRANTOR US Gold
Best Software House OCEAN
Best Utility PROFESSIONAL ADVENTURE WRITER Gilsoft
Best Peripheral MUTLIFACE Romantic Robot
Best PBM Game IT'S A CRIME KJC Games
Best Advert GAME OVER Imagine
Best Game Packaging DRILLER Incentive
Best Game Inlay GAME OVER Imagine
Most Challenging Game HEAD OVER HEELS Ocean

WORKSHOP BRANCHING OUT

SWAMP THING was seen dripping down Oxford street on Saturday March 12 – entertaining the crowds who queued up to celebrate the opening of a new **Games Workshop** retail outlet. People began to form an orderly line from 5.30pm on the Friday evening and it grew steadily throughout the night. By the time the shop opened at 7.00am, there were well over a 1,000 enthusiastic role-players waiting to invade the premises. Hundreds of bargains were to be had, with games selling for as little as £1.00 each. Many stars from the boardgames made personal appearances; Orcs, Dark Elves and Space Marines all turned up to meet their fans.

To back their claim that fantasy boardgames are increasing in popularity, by the time you read this Games Workshop will have opened yet another shop, this time in Southampton. Bargain games, celebrities and a £50 prize for the best fancy dress are all included to encourage a good response from the public. The address of the new shop is 23, East street, Southampton.

By 7.00am, over a thousand people had queued to be first in the Games Workshop's big new London store



THE SKIES THE LIMIT

MICROPROSE, creators of such programs as *Gunship* and *Project: Stealth Fighter* are beginning a new programmer recruitment drive throughout Europe.

'The quality of European programmers has never been better,' says MicroProse UK boss **Stewart Bell**, 'our new initiative is recognition of UK and European achievements and the huge amount of ability there is out there.'

Such is the scale of the recruitment drive that both American and UK divisions of the highly successful simulations company are involved in the search for new talent. The recruited programmers will work in the USA on products for both the UK and European markets.

Meanwhile, *Gunship*, MicroProse's best-selling AH-64 attack helicopter simulator now has Hercules monochrome support for the PC. The release is in response to requests from PC owners who wanted to run MicroProse products on their Hercules monochrome monitors. Changes have also been made so that the game now supports EGA mode on all currently available systems, with VGA cards along with the inclusion of a hard-disk installation and back-up copy creation facility. The amended game will be priced at £34.95.

And still further: in West Germany, MicroProse have overturned the ban placed on their submarine simulation *Silent Service*. The German censorship authorities, the Federal Office for Examination of Harmful Publications felt that the game fell under the heading of a product which was 'morally corrupting and coarsening' (the Germans generally ban all wargames under this heading). In early 1987, under German law, the game was subsequently banned and up til now has only been available through licensed adult shops! The recent lifting of the ban could mean that *F-15 Strike Eagle* and *Gunship* (currently under consideration by the German censorship authorities) could one day be available to the German youth.

SCHNEIDER vs AMSTRAD?

THE LUCRATIVE PC-clone market has resulted in an ironic twist to Amstrad's relationship with its former German distributor Schneider. While Amstrad attempts to establish its own cheap PC clones in Germany, Schneider has now launched some new computers which make 'innovative technology available at unusually low prices' – or put another way: yet more PC clones.

Currently Schneider is looking for British distributors to handle a range which begins at £450 for a Euro PC with integral 3.5" disk, 512K RAM and monochrome monitor. (A colour monitor raises the price to £620.)

The main sales point, besides pretty styling, is that hi-tech allows the machines to be built in Germany – rather than cheap labour Asian countries.

Amstrad, due to its own difficulties in the German market, claimed to be unworried since Schneider was virtually unknown in the UK market. At the same time, however, Dixons have announced that they'll now be stocking cheap Olivetti PCs alongside Amstrad machines – illustrating the increasingly crowded nature of this end of the PC market.

It could be timely for the end user – in the States PC machines have established themselves as the biggest sellers by far. Are we about to see the pattern repeated here in Britain?

Schneider's Tower PC – a modular concept that allows the user to add on as they wish



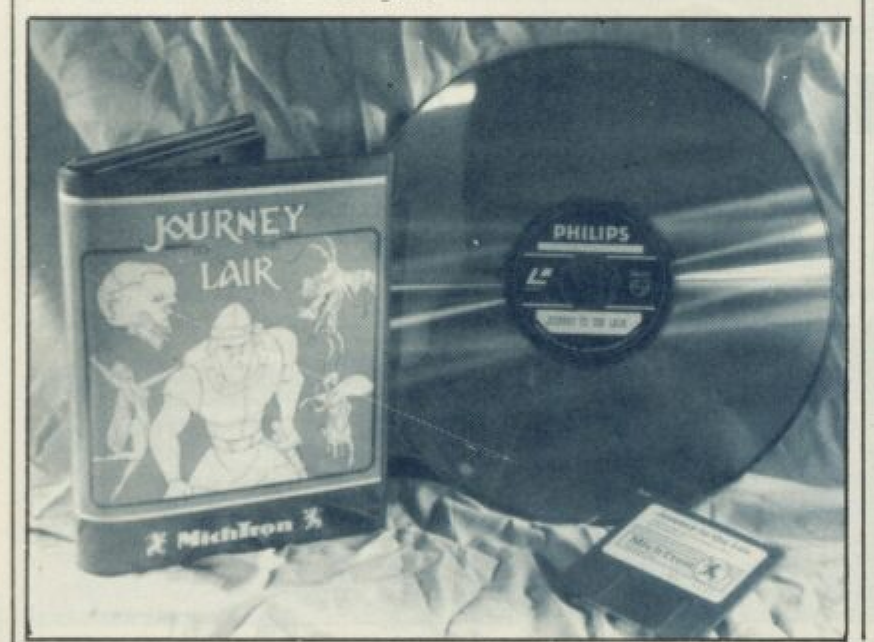
HOME COMPUTER LASERS ARE HERE!

MICRODEAL have stolen the march to be first with an interactive laser disk game. It's called *Journey Into The Lair* and it is for the Atari ST. Sounds good? We'll let you know next issue after THE GAMES MACHINE has had a go. But there is a drawback – price.

To buy *Journey Into The Lair* will set you back £99.95, and if you do not own the cable link to connect your computer with a video disk player, that will cost you another £19.95. And then, of course, you need access to a video disk player itself. Microdeal say the game will work on all four popular machines as long as they have interface ports; they are the Hitachi 9550, the Magnavox 8040 and Pioneer LD700 and 900 models.

What you get for your money is the game Atari disk, *Dragons' Lair* PAL video disk and instruction manual. And the result is a fully animated computer game as in the arcades, featuring three skill levels as you play Dirk Daring in his brave rescue of Princess Daphine from the fierce dragon's clutches.

Microdeal's new interactive laser game



NEWS BITS

VICTOR, the Japanese video company known here as **JVC**, has announced plans to produce a new Super VHS video system in Europe. The specifications are not complete but their main objective is to produce a system offering 400 lines of horizontal resolution and providing strikingly high picture quality. Additionally the Super VHS system is being designed to incorporate a common recording format which can be applied throughout Europe regardless of different television signals, whether they be PAL or SECAM.

The system will only run Super VHS tapes, which should be available in SE-180, 120 and 30 formats with a tape speed running 2.43cm per second. JVC was unable to confirm any European release dates to THE GAMES MACHINE but they are convinced that it would be a quantum leap for technology taking the video hardware market by storm, and contribute to world wide video culture. Optimistic company JVC.

TELEMAP, the company which runs the comms service **Micronet**, is enticing modem owners to mix socially in a new entertainment service – **Hotel California**. Hotel California offers the user all the joys (!) of staying in an American hotel complete with casino, newsagents and a shopping mall (being run by mail-order company **Kays**). Socialising is done in the Cafe Society where guests can have public conversations – but should talk grow more intimate, 'Conference Suites' are available. And if problems arise on your stay, the Night Porter is there with an advice line and horoscopes.

Telemap aims the service at the 18-plus age group: 'Though not for censorship reasons.' says Telemap's **David Rosenbaum**. Hotel California is available without subscription to Prestel or Micronet, requiring a 1200/75 baud modem, and is accessed by dialing 0989 01 0890, costing 38p per minute and 25p per minute off-peak.

In May **Gremlin Graphics**'s resident loony programmers are jumping out of a plane for charity. Well done boys! However, the seven-strong team have been persuaded to use parachutes as it was felt that otherwise the daring leap would muck up Gremlin's autumn release schedule. The charity in question is the Royal National Lifeboat Association, and if you feel like sponsoring the lads, send a cheque or postal order to: **RNLI Parachute Event, Gremlin Graphics, *Alpha House, 10 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS.***

INFORMATION DESK

Robin Hogg presents a page of helpful advice on both technical and game matters gleaned from our own experience, and that of readers.

Kicking off this month is Steven Tany **from Hammersmith in London, with with some tips for the Sega games *Black Belt* and *Rocky*, and a question about Sega hardware.**

1.To gain infinite lives on *Black Belt* push the reset button at the same time as the demo begins! To be the King of the Ring in *Rocky* use the following tactics: when against Apollo, concentrate on his head, and to beat Lang, keep punching him in the stomach. The last opponent, Drago, is very tough and can only be defeated by building up to a speed of seven punches per second in the punch-ball sequence before the fight. Any less and he's impossible to defeat.

2.Will Sega be releasing a monitor for the Sega system?

Although there is a stereo monitor available in America for the Sega, there are no plans as yet to release it or any other for the console in the UK. In THE GAMES MACHINE we link up our Sega to a monitor with RGB/TTL input.

James Savage **of Cirencester, Gloucestershire has some questions to put to the Information Desk concerning Commodore's 16-bit machine the Amiga**

1.Is *Wizball* from Ocean and *Barbarian – The Ultimate Warrior* from Palace Software coming out for the Amiga?

Both *Wizball* and *Barbarian* (complete with Maria Whittaker poster) should be out for the Amiga by the time you read this James, priced at £24.95 and £19.99 respectively.

2.Is it possible to convert an Atari Trakball into an Amiga mouse 'emulator'?

It is technically possible, but you probably need detailed circuit plans of both the TrakBall and the Amiga mouse to manually reconfigure the TrakBall connections. An alternative method would be to amend the mouse handling software but as this is buried deep within the Amiga's operating system this would be very difficult to say the least (if not downright impossible). Commodore can be contacted on 0628-770088.

Proud MSX owner Russell Gosling **of Hinckley, Leicestershire is enquiring about the Toshiba HX-22 and Konami cartridge software.**

1.I have heard rumours from various people that the Toshiba HX-22 is not an MSX II machine, is this true?

I'm afraid so Russell, the only MSX II machines available in the UK (legally that is) are in the Phillips and Sony ranges. Here at THE GAMES MACHINE we use a Sony Hit Bit machine, *F-1 Spirit* and *USAS* being reviewed in this issue on said machine.

2.Does *Nemesis II* and *Salamander* from Konami work on the 64K MSXs?

According to Konami, you shouldn't have any problems with running the two games on a 64K machine. Since all the necessary software is held on the cartridge, all that's required of the MSX machine is an operating system to load the game in.

R Smith **of Wakefield, West Yorkshire is very much interested in GOING OVERBOARD, the regular boardgames section in THE GAMES MACHINE and is a talented person judging by the question he posed to the Information Desk.**

1.I have invented a boardgame which I think is worth producing. I may want to sell it but I don't know who to approach. Can you help?

Paradigm Games, the producers of the best-selling boardgame *September* are always interested in new games and original ideas, and you can contact them at Paradigm Games Limited, *2 Bradbrook House, Studio Place, Kinnerton Street, London SW1* or telephone them on 01-235-6217. Waddingtons Games are another big name in the board game field and you can give them a call on 0532-826195 or write to them at Waddingtons Games Ltd, *Castle Gate, Oulton, Leeds, LS26 8HG.*

Kingsley Fleming **from County Cork, Ireland is interested in buying an arcade machine; namely the classic coin-op *Nemesis.***

I would like to know more about the Nintendo system . . .

I have invented a boardgame but I don't know who to approach.

Is it possible to convert an Atari Trakball into an Amiga mouse 'emulator'?

1.Could you give me some information on how I should go about getting a machine.

Well Kingsley, you would probably expect to pay over £1,000 for the complete set, including cabinet and PCB kit. If the price tag doesn't put you off then why not contact distributors Deith Leisure Plc at *127 Wandsworth High Street, London, SW18 4JB* (01-870-5224) for more information. Konami are releasing a Nintendo version of *Nemesis* under the title of *Gradius*, which looks truly excellent, so it may be worth contacting them if your budget doesn't quite stretch to a full blown arcade machine. Contact Konami through the Konami Software Club, *Bank Building, Bank Street, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ12 2JL* (0626-68611).

ST owner Philip Shore **of Hitchin in Hertfordshire is having problems with his Okidata Microline 83A printer.**

1.Do I need any special software to run the printer?

Text files and documents of data can be printed without the need for special software Philip, so you shouldn't have any problems with running the printer through programs such as *First Word, Calligrapher* and *Fleet Street Editor*.

2. Will I be able to do graphics and screendumps on the ST?

As far as we know, block graphics and normal text characters are the only graphics which are supported on the 83A. For a test of the printer's screen dump capabilities, try the trusted manual method of holding down the Alternate key and pressing Help. Generally though, the results aren't too good if you're trying to produce screen dumps on printers incapable of supporting high-resolution graphics.

3.There is a printer driver on *Degas Elite* for the Microline 84, can I use this on the 83A?

It is possible to adapt the 84 driver to suit the 83A but the graphics handling code within the driver would need extensive reworking, something best left alone unless you know what you're doing.

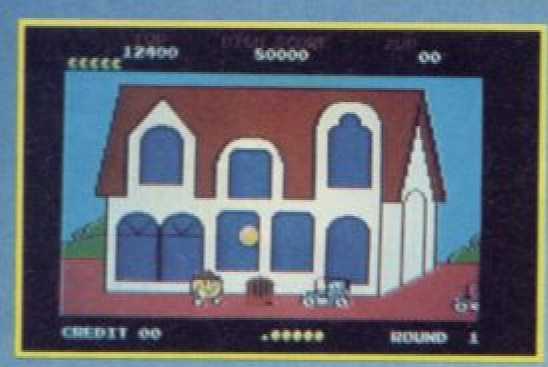
That's it for this month's edition of the Information Desk. If you've got anything to ask about the world of computers and electronic entertainment, tips on the latest games or solutions to reader problems, write to INFORMATION DESK, THE GAMES MACHINE, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1DB*. On-line readers can of course MBX us by using our I-D (TGM).





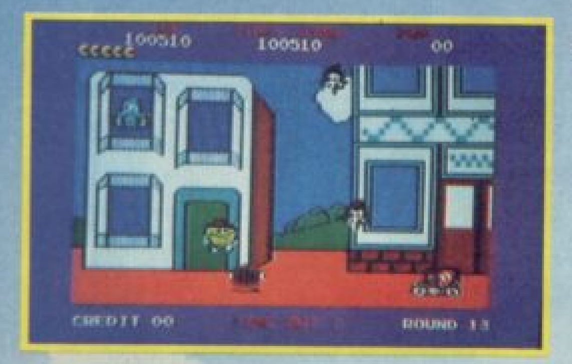
TM and © 1984
NAMCO Ltd

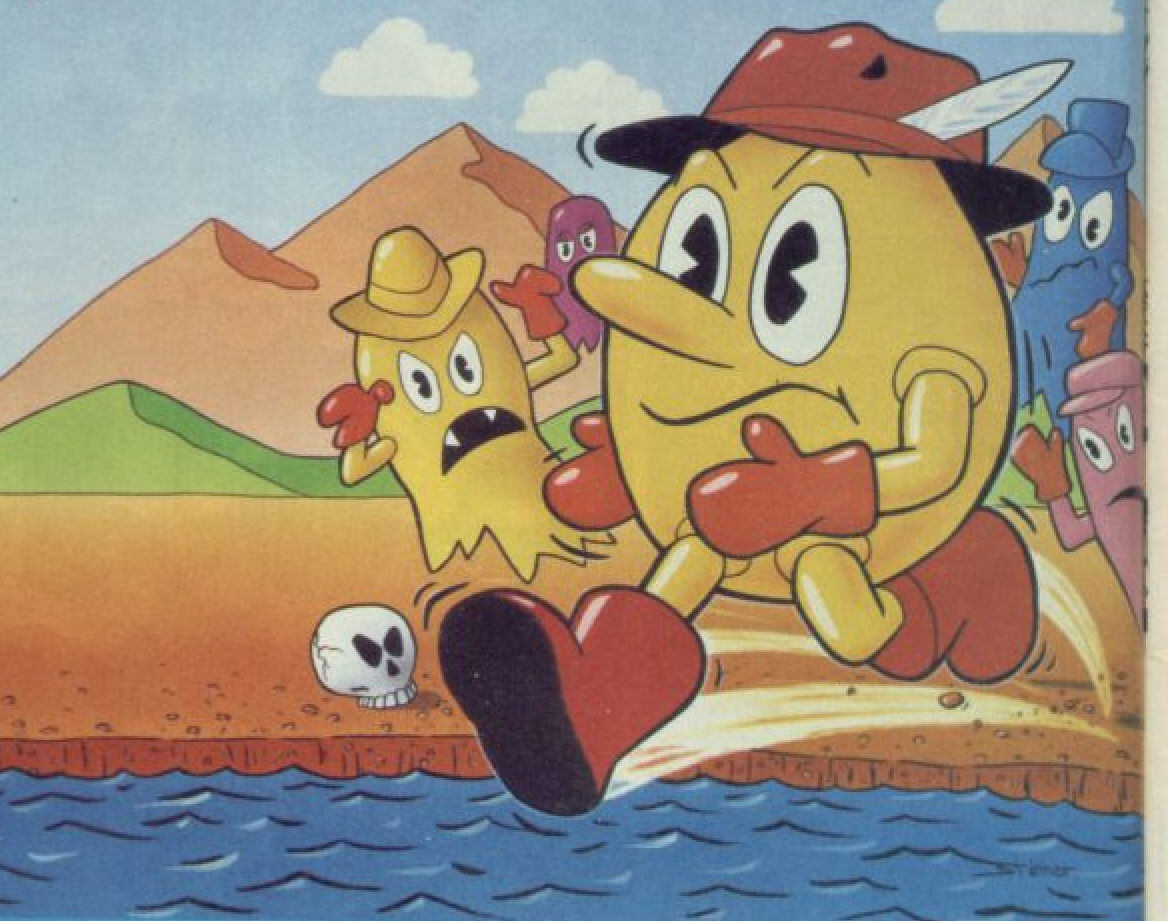
PAC'S BACK



PAC - the world's most famous computer character is back. There are many imitations but only one original PAC-LAND. This superb conversion of the internationally famous coin-op is not to be missed.







QUICKSILVA

Victory House Leicester Place London WC2 7NB

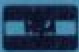
You can obtain your copy of PAC-LAND direct from Grand Slam Entertainments - Post and packaging FREE!!!

Write now or send with a cheque or postal order made payable to Grand Slam Entertainments Ltd.
B & L Distribution, Units 1 & 2, Conlon Development, Water Lane, Darwen, Lancs. BB3 2ET.

Name ....

Address ....

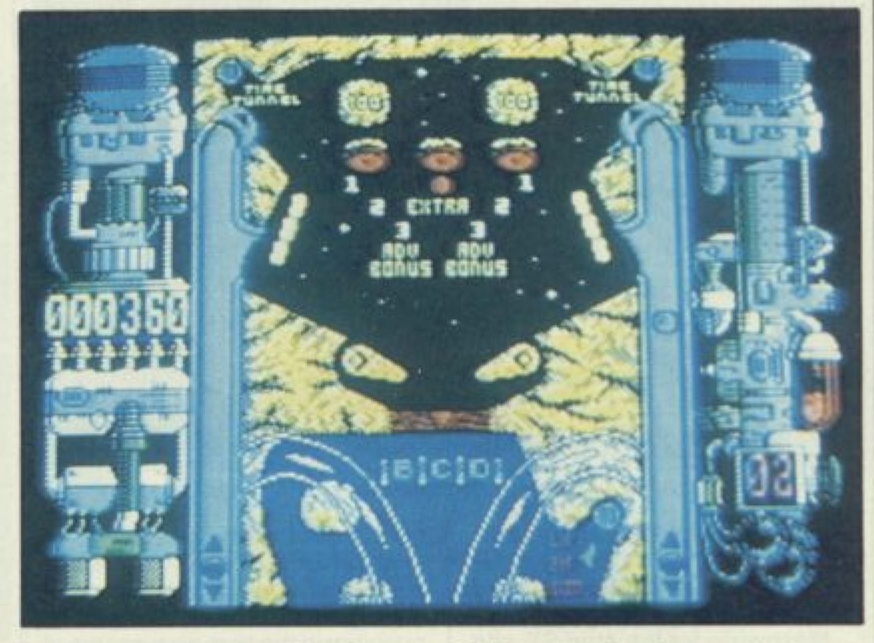
Town ....

or Phone: 01-439 0666 - our Credit Card Hotline  

STUDIO LINE

Southampton may conjure up images of Tall Ships, old sea dogs and episodes of *Howard's Way*, but delve a bit further, in the general direction of Terminus Terrace, and you will find SOFTWARE STUDIOS, the Activision group's development headquarters. Richard Eddy, complete with deck-shoes, reports.

SOFTWARE STUDIOS are not the only studios to be found in Terminus Terrace; next door is situated BBC South's studios. And, true to my appalling sense of direction, I managed to make a BBC commisionaire very bewildered as he struggled to offer me ordinary studios, but not ones with any software. But to the BBC's left, about 100 yards, sits the real Software Studios office, equipped with nearly every piece of hardware imaginable.



The pinball simulation Time Scanner *is Software Studios's nearest coin-op conversion to completion – Commodore 64 screen*

So this is Software Studios. 'Yes, the central hub on the wheel of development control!' proudly states **Neil Jackson**, one of the Studios's producers.

Software Studios, born in the old Electric Dreams offices, takes care of development, both technical and creative, for **Activision** and its associated labels. Although most product is written out-of-house, the Southampton office is a place where the programmers can come for back-up facilities and advice.

Software Studios is, additionally, the product testing base for Activision games. All games are subjected to rigorous playtesting, not only to ensure that the required features and effects have been included, but also to check if any refinements can be made.

The coin-op conversion ***Karnov*** is currently doing the keyboard rounds at the moment – and everyone is pleased with it. **Andy Percival**, liaison officer between the Studios and Activision's Hampstead head office, has this to say on the subject on the infamous firebreathing Russian: 'Karnov is, we imagine, the pinnacle of Spectrum conversions. The sort of game that makes it tempting to say, 'Right, we've done it – the perfect Spectrum conversion why bother to do any more?', but we don't want to work to that attitude. Now we know a product like *Karnov* can be achieved, who knows what else is possible?'

MAJOR LICENCES

Three more coin-op licences are to come from the Studios before 1988 draws to a close. Targetted for later in the year, ***Afterburner*** is the major licence. An upright arcade machine is already installed and the development team has been throwing ideas around. **Andy Percival** again: 'We decided to scrap some elements of *Afterburner* straight away. We studied the machine and decided what we liked best about it. It was, obviously, the speed and exhilaration. To capture that on a home micro – it's planned for release on Spectrum, Commodore 64/128, Amstrad, Atari ST and Amiga – the game is going to lose a lot of graphic detail, especially on the ground.

'We also looked at what Sega had done in converting it for the Master System – it was unimpressive. How could they leave out the speed variation and, of all things, the afterburner control itself? We are aiming to do a lot better.'

Afterburner is planned for a Christmas release.

Activision's other licence is ***R-Type***, the smash hit scrolling shoot-'em-up that swallows 10 pences quicker than the Royal Mint can make them. The graphics are under development at the moment, mainly on the Atari ST. Their redrawing from the arcade original is the task of **Mark Jones**, author of Rainbird's ***ST Art Studio***; and in some cases he is making them look better than on the coin-op.

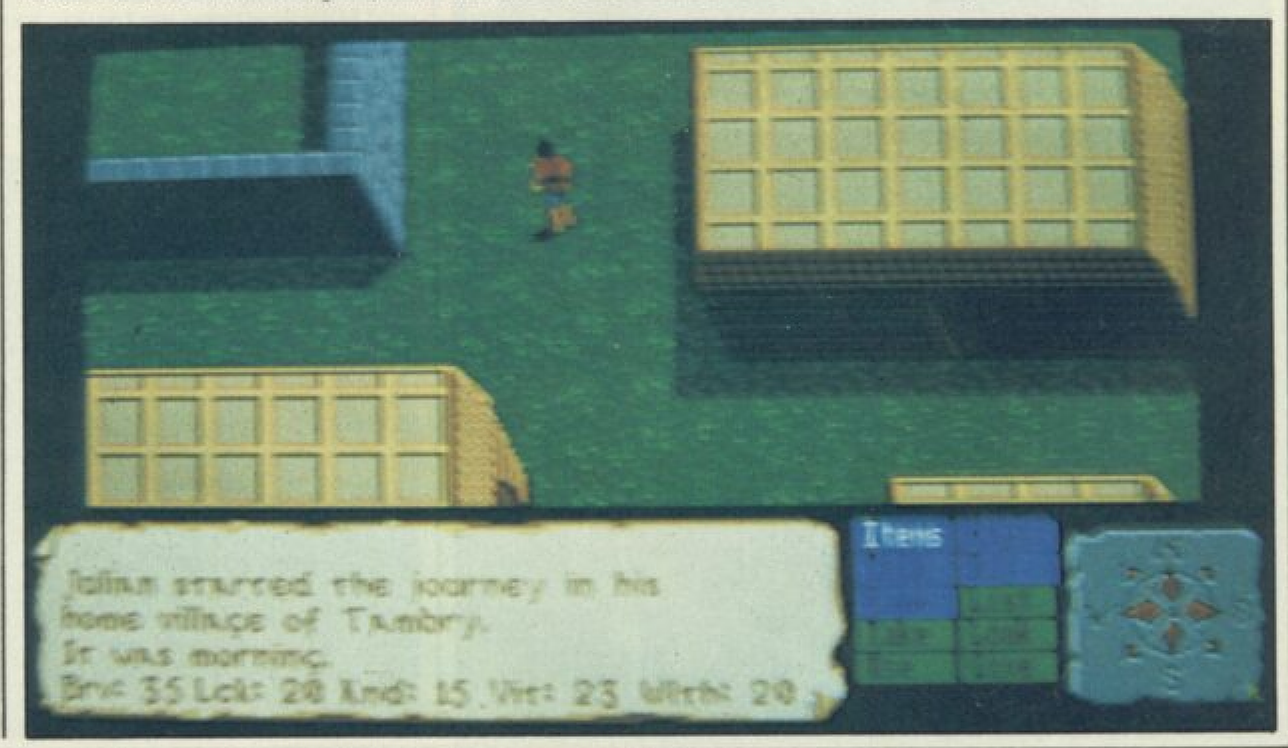
Nearest completion is Sega's ***Time Scanner***. If you haven't played the game in the arcades, *Time Scanner* is a pinball simulation, spread over four levels each with a different theme including ruins and a volcano scene. Currently, playtesters are determining whether the ball movement is accurate enough – the conversion looks good, but they want it to be perfect.

ON 16-BIT

In the 16-bit area, Activision has tied up **MicroIllusions**, an American software house already well known for its excellent role-playing epic ***Faerie Tale***, which Activision is releasing at a more affordable price than the original. **Dave Cummings**, Chief Playtester at the Studios, is currently wading through that one. 'It's huge,' he says in exasperation, 'I played all through the night once and only covered a small part of the map.'

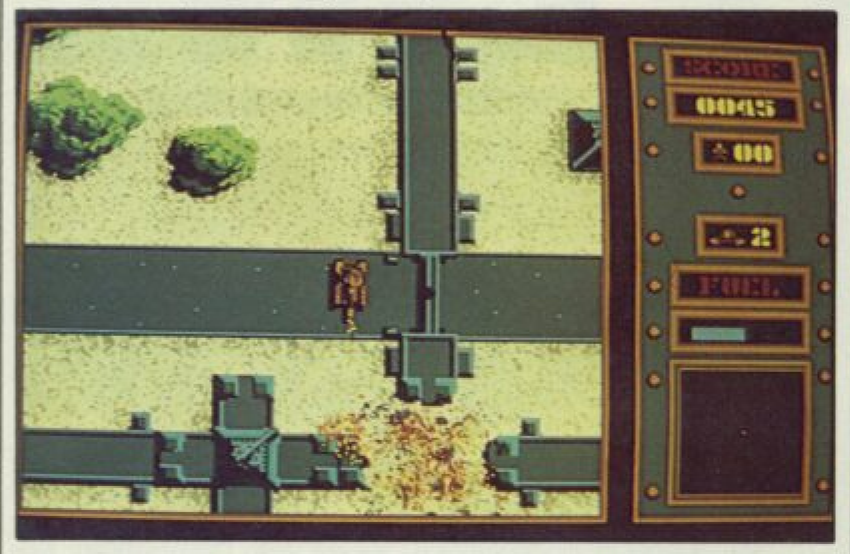
Fire Power, another from MicroIllusions, may remind you of SNK's coin-op *Tank*. The game places the player in control of a armoured tank breaking into enemy territory. *Fire Power* offers three choices of play – player-v-

More affordable than the original, MicroIllusions's Faerie Tale *is an excellent RPG – Amiga screen*



PRESS ANY KEY

computer, player-v-player or two players connected through a modem. The view is from overhead with multi-directional scrolling. Complete with digitised



On the Amiga Fire Power *is an efficient blaster*

explosions, it all adds up to an efficient blaster. *Fire Power* is available first for the Amiga, and other versions are planned.

Meanwhile for the Atari ST, and later for the PC, ***Archipelago*** an adventure game which may, when completed, be capable of displaying up to 20,000, locations each with its own graphical representation. Such a game, which must be playtested right through, represents an immense task for Software Studios.

And what about the future? **Neil Jackson** has a few bright ideas . . . 'We'll be concentrating on creative polish – with the possibilities that 16-bit machines offer, we are going to try and make each game like a film release, pushing up the corporate image of Activision and Electric Dreams with title sequences and effective packaging.'

THE GAMES MACHINE will keep you up to date with Software Studios's creative polishing over the forthcoming months.



Up to 20,000 locations in the graphic adventure Archipelago *on the Atari ST*



SEASONAL GAMES FROM EPYX

The American software house **Epyx** has long enjoyed a reputation for quality sporting compendia combining stunning graphics, high presentation levels and game play surpassing almost any other sporting simulations (though some may wish to argue over *Match Day 2*'s excellent design).

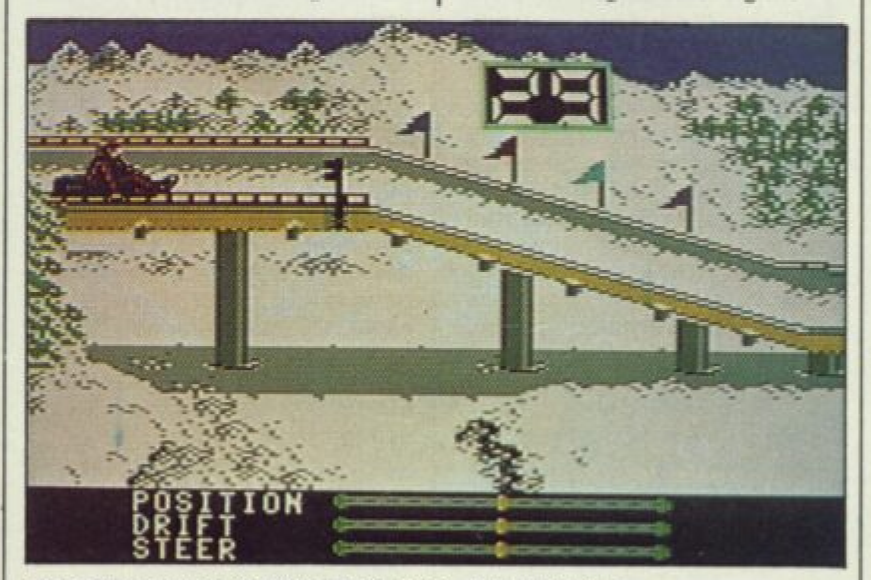
So it should delight sporting fans to hear that their sixth compendium: ***The Games – Winter Edition***, nudged inevitably by recent events at the Winter Olympics held in Canada, is due for release shortly. A Commodore 64/128 version has been completed, written by a 20-strong team, and is currently selling in the States, but because of the licence deal which gives US Gold European marketing and distribution rights, we in the UK will have to wait until Summer proper when Spectrum, Amstrad CPC and MSX II versions are ready.

Roger Swindells, Epyx's European Product Manager informed us: '**Sentient Software**, who converted *Winter Games*, are working on the other formats which will not only be released in the UK but in 16 additional countries with translated versions for release in France, Germany and Spain.

'I've already seen some early versions,' he went on, ' and they're looking good – the Spectrum is obviously going to be the hardest to convert, not only because of the machine's graphical limitations, but also because sound plays such an important part in the games.'

The Games – Winter Edition features seven new sporting events. As with past Epyx sporting games there are excellent opening titles, complete with Opening Ceremony and options allowing players to compete in all events, some events or just one. Alternatively a practice run can be undertaken.

We kick off with **The Luge**. A Luge is similar to a toboggan, but designed to be the utmost in aerodynamic efficiency – it has no side panels, making the race incredibly fast and equally dangerous. The objective is to belt around courses of up to 1000 metres in length achieving the fastest speed possible by angling your body corresponding to the angle of the track's curved sides. Displayed from almost overhead, screens flick from one segment of the course to another.



The oddly named Luge from **The Games – Winter Edition**

The other six events are split into two sections: two skating and four skiing events. **Figure skating** is an unusual event; the screen shows the silhouetted figure of a skater ready and waiting for the player to select music to dance to. As the music plays the contestant choreographs the dance by pointing to icons representing different movements. Having decided upon a dance routine it's time to show it to the judges. Here you have to remember your prechoreographed dance and execute as it was planned.

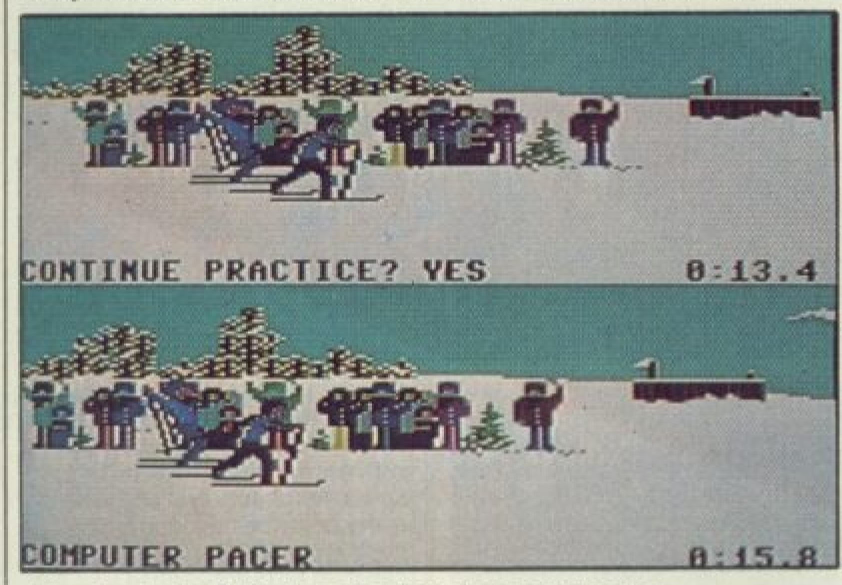
In **speed skating** all competitors race on four tracks, battling it out to achieve the fastest time. Quite simply, it is a waggle event, thrusting the joystick left and right to increase momentum.

The four skiing events are **downhill**, **slalom**, **ski jump** and **cross country**. In the downhill,

as well as achieving a fast speed, tricks can be performed. Much of the race is displayed in first-person perspective, looking down at the track in front, but as soon as you come into view on one of the cameras, the display changes to a side view – this is where the skier can do flips and twirls and other fancy moves to boost the score.

the beautifully drawn countryside of Canada. To progress along the courses – there are four – the joystick is moved left and right in a rhythmical fashion. The screens displays a two-player race simultaneously and the one to finish first is the winner.

As with past Epyx *Games* series there are award ceremonies and



Attractive display in Epyx's split-screen cross country event

The slalom is straightforward – the winner is the player to complete the course in the quickest time.

Ski jumping requires concentration and timing rather than speed for a player to do well. At strategic points on the run and in flight the joystick is moved to control the skier's angle and position – one for the practice mode! Finally, in the cross country event, the competitor traverses

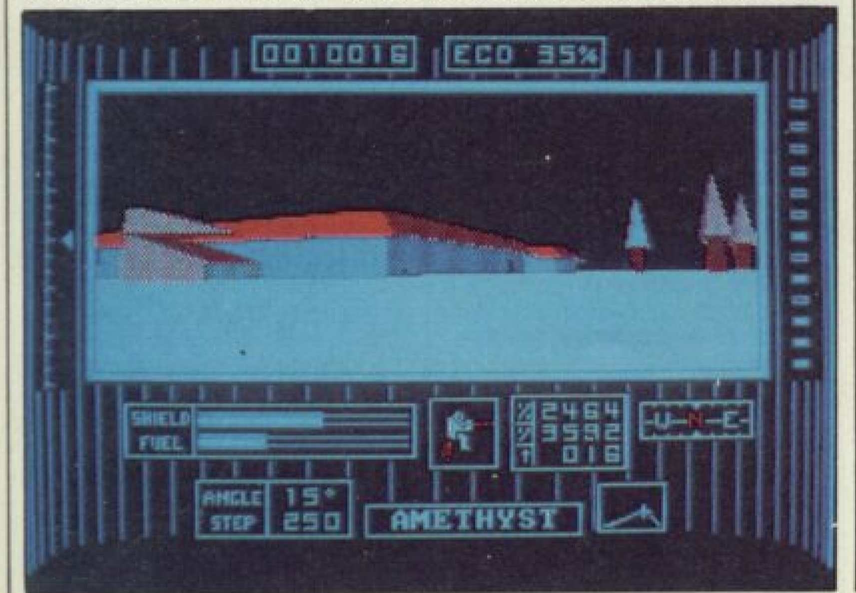
plenty of humour to spice up the gruelling action. The obvious question is: are we going to see *The Games – Summer Edition*? 'Well,' mutters a rather noncommital Swindells, 'the American side are definitely thinking about it, but it's so early yet the events to be included haven't been decided upon, so don't expect to see anything before the end of the year at least.'

DRILLING AGAIN

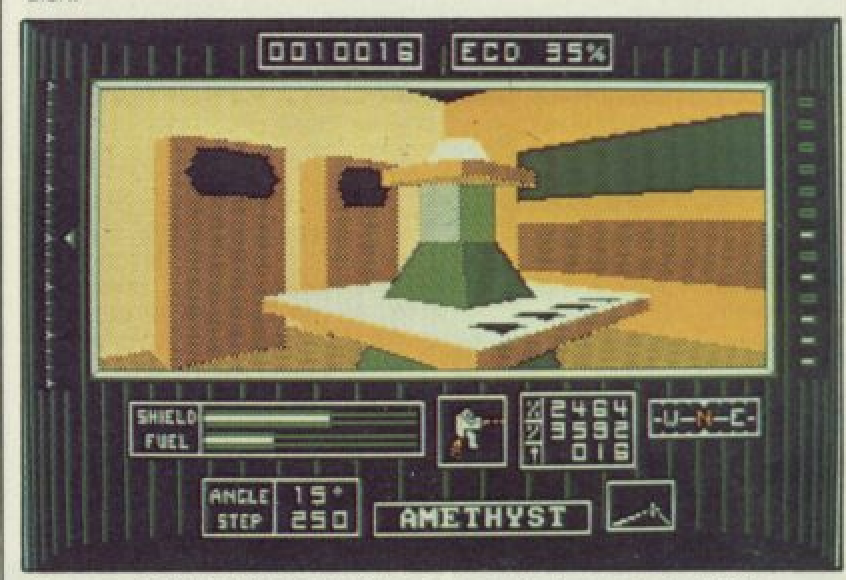
Two major Spring releases are on their way from **Incentive**. The first is ***Dark Side***, sequel to *Driller*, and featuring once again the highly effective solid 3-D graphic routine **FREESCAPE** written and designed by **Major Developments**.

The game is set some 200 years after the *Driller* quest. The Ketars, exiled from their home planet of Evath, are planning revenge. On the dark side of their banishment planet Tricuspid, they have constructed the ultimate weapon, Zephyr One, and have aimed it directly at Evath, programmed to destroy the planet on impact.

The objective of *Dark Side* is to prevent the Ketars detonating Zephyr One, but, like *Driller*, the game also incorporates several sub-plots and



mini-quests. *Dark Side* is planned for release in May on Spectrum, Commodore 64/128 and Amstrad CPC at £9.95 on cassette, £14.95 for Spectrum+3 and Amstrad disk, and £12.95 for Commodore 64/128 disk.



***The second FREESCAPE adventure starts on the Amstrad* – Dark Side**

The second release is an upgrade of Incentive's acclaimed ***Graphic Adventure Creator*** (GAC), soon to be released for Atari ST. The much-improved version is called ***ST Adventure Creator*** – or STAC – and Incentive claims it to be far more powerful and flexible than its predecessor.



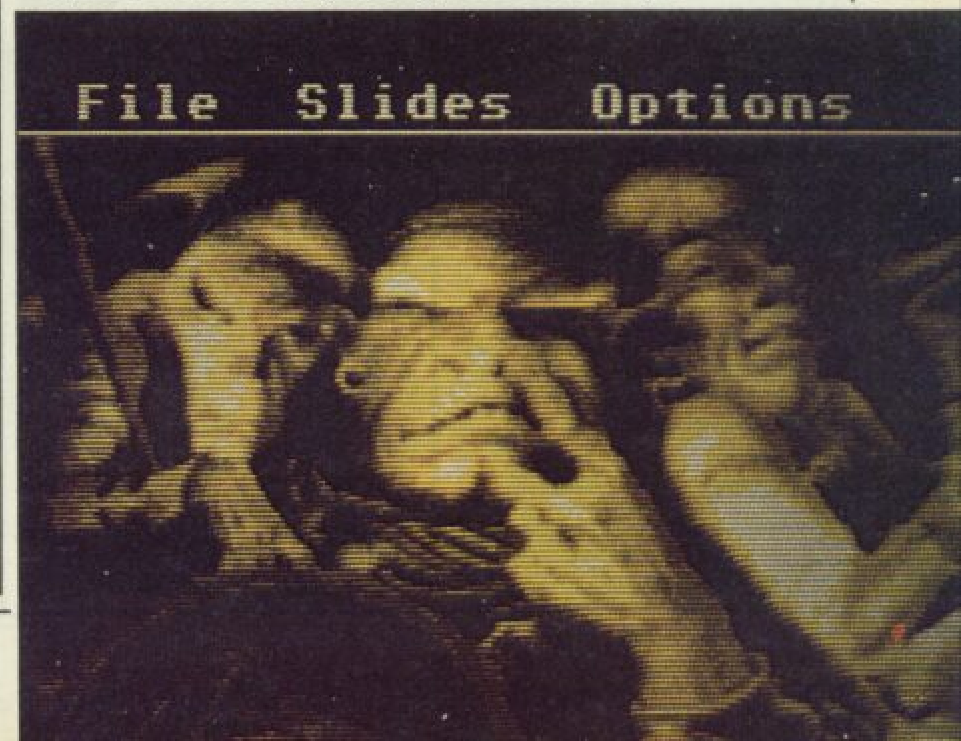
Two pictures from one of STAC's example adventures which show what can be done with talent, imagination and ST Adventure Creator. *These were done by David Wyatt, an artist new to computers. Digitised from his original paintings, they were imported from* Neochrome.

Having entered the relevant data describing locations, objects, defining messages and instructions for the whole control of the game, you can create an ordinary text-adventure. However, STAC has a graphics editor allowing the user to create as many full-colour pictures as the game can handle. ***Degas*** or ***Neochrome*** 'slides' can be imported into STAC and stored in a compressed format.

STAC itself takes up roughly 100K of a disk leaving the user a minimum of 300K to play with. Additionally, STAC comes with a disk containing several character fonts, a test adventure file, graphic demos and a free 200K adventure.

Priced at £39.95, STAC goes on general release in April.

PRESS ANY KEY



IN PRODUCTION

Strange brews are almost the name of the computer game, but if you want to talk odd, how about this one: design a game licensed from **Worlds Of Wonder**'s ***Lazer Tag*** when the toy's manufacturer insists that the computerised version must be strictly non-violent and involve no injuries, let alone death.



Go! have tackled the problem and are set to release *Lazer Tag* any time now. They got around the problem by simply substituting the word 'tag' for 'death' or 'injury'. The game is *Commando* orientated, insomuch as a landscape, suitably equipped with hiding places, scrolls vertically downwards. As in the physical game, the object is to tag all other contestants before they tag you. The real-life *Lazer Tag* is currently one of the most popular crazes in the States, so much so that special arenas have been built to accomodate battles. We covered the system and how it all works in TGM**001**. Next month the computer game will be reviewed and a select group of GAMES MACHINISTS will be given the chance to compete in a battle arena. Details are currently under negotiation with Go! and Mattel, *Lazer Tag*'s UK distributors – don't miss TGM**007** for further news.

Go!'s £12 million deal with arcade producers **Capcom** spawns yet another conversion in May – ***Street Fighter***. Fighting your way through five levels, each set in different locations around the world, *Street Fighter* is best described as a mixture of *Fist II* and *Fighting Warrior*. On the Spectrum the game is being converted by **John Prince** of Tiertec who has to his credit the excellent Spectrum version of Atari's *720°*.

OF MICE'N'MONSTERS

Downstairs, below Go!'s offices, is **Gremlin Graphics**'s Birmingham programming base. It is here that the programming of ***Mickey Mouse***, Gremlin's second Disney licence, is currently under way. The action is set in Disney castle where four wicked witches, under orders from the Ogre King, are doing their worst to create havoc throughout the Magic Kingdom. Mickey's quest is to climb the four towers defeating the Ogre King's minions along the way and rebuild Merlin's wand, which has been broken into four and one piece given to each witch to guard.

The screen displays a cross-section view of the tower, scrolling vertically, with Mickey climbing up and down ladders. A Disneyesqe feel for the characters is captured well in the graphics and there's typical Disney music to accompany the gameplay. Occasionally doors are to be found within the towers' walls, and behind each lies one of four bonus games ranging from an upside down version of *Space Invaders* to a *Pipeline* variant. It's all scheduled to appear on **Spectrum**, **Commodore 64/128**, **Amstrad CPC** and **Atari ST** in May.

Naturally, the cuteness that smugly sits with *Mickey Mouse* may not appeal to Real MEN who prefer a bit of violence and ten pints of 1040. For hunks, then, Gremlin have the ideal product – ***Hercules***, master of muscles and all-round Aegean tough guy. Taken from Greek mythological stories, Hercules, under a curse from his goddess mother Hera, has slaughtered his children. After pleading for forgiveness, the gods decide to release him from the curse as long as he performs (literally) herculean tasks. Hercules is sent to the king of Argos who sets him 12 tasks to complete. With a bit of help from the player, Hercules battles with minotaurs and other beasts. Hercules will be flat packed and ready to go (. . . it's so easy . . .) at the end of April.



Hercules

GLIDING BACK

Rainbird's *Starglider* proved to be one of the biggest sellers of last year with its stylised 3-D wireframe graphics routines. And if it's worth doing once, it's worth doing again. ***Starglider II*** is on its way, programmed by **Argonaut Software**, who also wrote the original.

The major noticable improvement is the filled-in 3-D graphics, but gameplay goes much deeper than the advanced shoot-'em-up action of *Starglider*. The story, told fully in a novella, involves the original game's heroes, Jaysan and Katra, in a cosmic battle fought against their long time enemies, the Egrons, who plan to destroy Jaysan and Katra's home planet of Novenia with the use of a beam projector.

The course is set for Mira, an Egron-dominated planet, and the luck of the gods is not quite with you – for a start incoming ships can only enter unarmed. Entering unarmed into enemy territory is not an easily contemplated manoeuvre, but then, neither is confronting the Hallucitron projector – a device which throws images of hideous creatures on your view screen, making your course yet more hazardous.

You are faced with contending against some 80 characters, including space whales, slithering pac-worms and graceful but deadly manta rays; but the main battles are fought against notorious starglider craft. The sequel is, claim Rainbird, one of the most complex programs ever written . . .

Earth Light is a title which has been bandied about the industry for a while – it's the name of **Pete Cooke**'s (*Tau Ceti*, *Micronaut One*) latest game and **Firebird** have signed up the rights to release it. On the moon a peculiar alien creature, that goes by the name of Slaatn, is stranded – his only hope of escape back to his home planet is by destroying force field generators and combatting an army of security droids that roam the crater-ridden moon surface trying to keep the force fields in operation.

Pete's previous games have all contained innovative features in them – with *Earth Light* he has designed a graphics routine that creates incredible shadowing effects on the scrolling moon surface, changing as the Earth, streaming with light, revolves around the sun. *Earth Light* is planned for release in June, initially for the **Spectrum**.

In May **Rainbird** plan to release a graphical shoot-'em-up extravaganza on the **Atari ST**, to be followed by the **Amiga**. ***Verminator*** is the game; it's set within an decaying oak tree riddled with vermin. *Verminator* is the star and a mercenary one at that – for every creature he exterminates cash is earned. Extra equipment can then be purchased to take him through the entire 250 locations. Cash can be accumulated in banks or a casino, or even borrowed from loan sharks if he's desperate. Rich with colour and a fair bit of humour, *Verminator* is programmed by **Chris Hinsley** with graphics from **Nigel Brownjohn**, authors of the *Advanced ST Art Studio*.

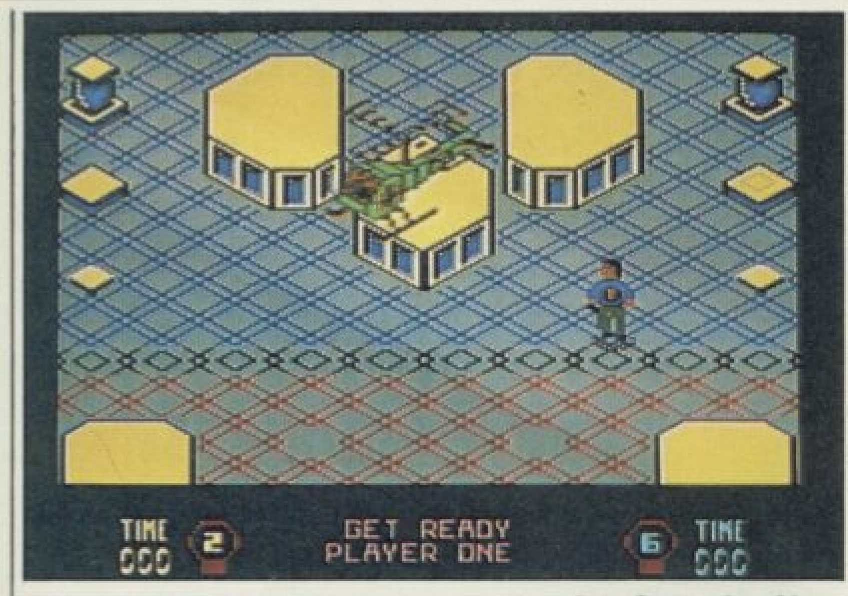


Verminator: ***we came, we saw, we kicked its proboscis! Atari ST screen***

WASTE NOT . . .

New software house **Exocet** are making their debut very soon with ***Foundation's Waste*** – a shoot-'em-up on the **Atari ST**. The Federation, a militaristic governing force, has captured you, a rebel, trying to escape for the seventh time. The next time plans will have to be laid. The game is the next time – armed with information from Federation records and a stolen ship, the objective is to blast through defence systems and destroy as much of the Federation planet as possible. Shields, side-shooters and extra lives are gained along the way. Full review next month.

Strip Poker II goes all the way – right down to the bits which makes the **Amiga** and **Atari ST** blush. **Anco** is set to release this outrage of extensive sexism next month. But how sexist is it – exploiting the female gender again? Anco's **Karen Graham** explains: 'We're bound to have some complaints, but we expect that. And it's not only female strippers, we're currently digitising some male strippers for release later in the year'. Tit for tat then. You won't find *Strip Poker II* in WH Smith shops, however, the chain store has refused to stock it. But interest is riding high says Anco – they've already been flooded with orders. However, we mustn't forget the poker element must we? Find out in the full review next month.



The first non-violent shoot-'em-up: Lazer Tag *from Go! – Commodore 64 screen*



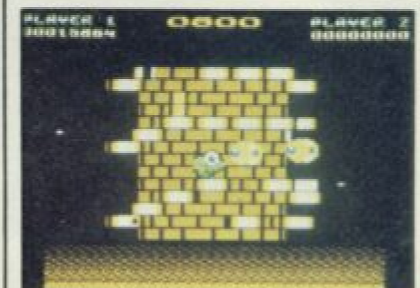
The eponymous Disney rodent, Mickey Mouse *– above on the Atari ST*



Loriciels's Championship Ski



The pros and cons of being a Minotaur as described by SSI's Advanced D & D game, Heroes Of The Lance *– Amiga screen*

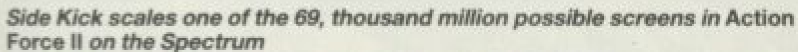


Pogo hops back into action on the Amstrad with Nebulus *one of the many Hewson releases to come*

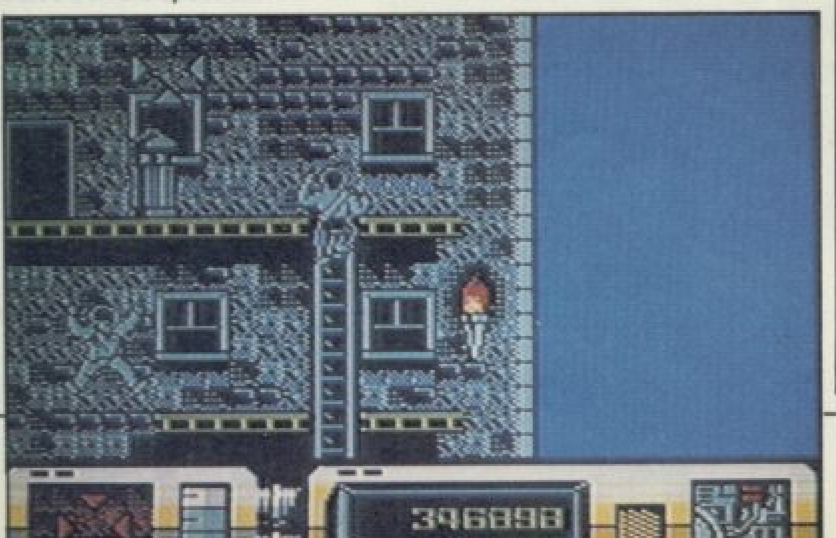
Launching Exocet is Foundation's Waste, *first out for the the Atari ST*



A clever new use of horizon gives Loriciels's Championship Ski *on the Amstrad a heightened feeling of reality*



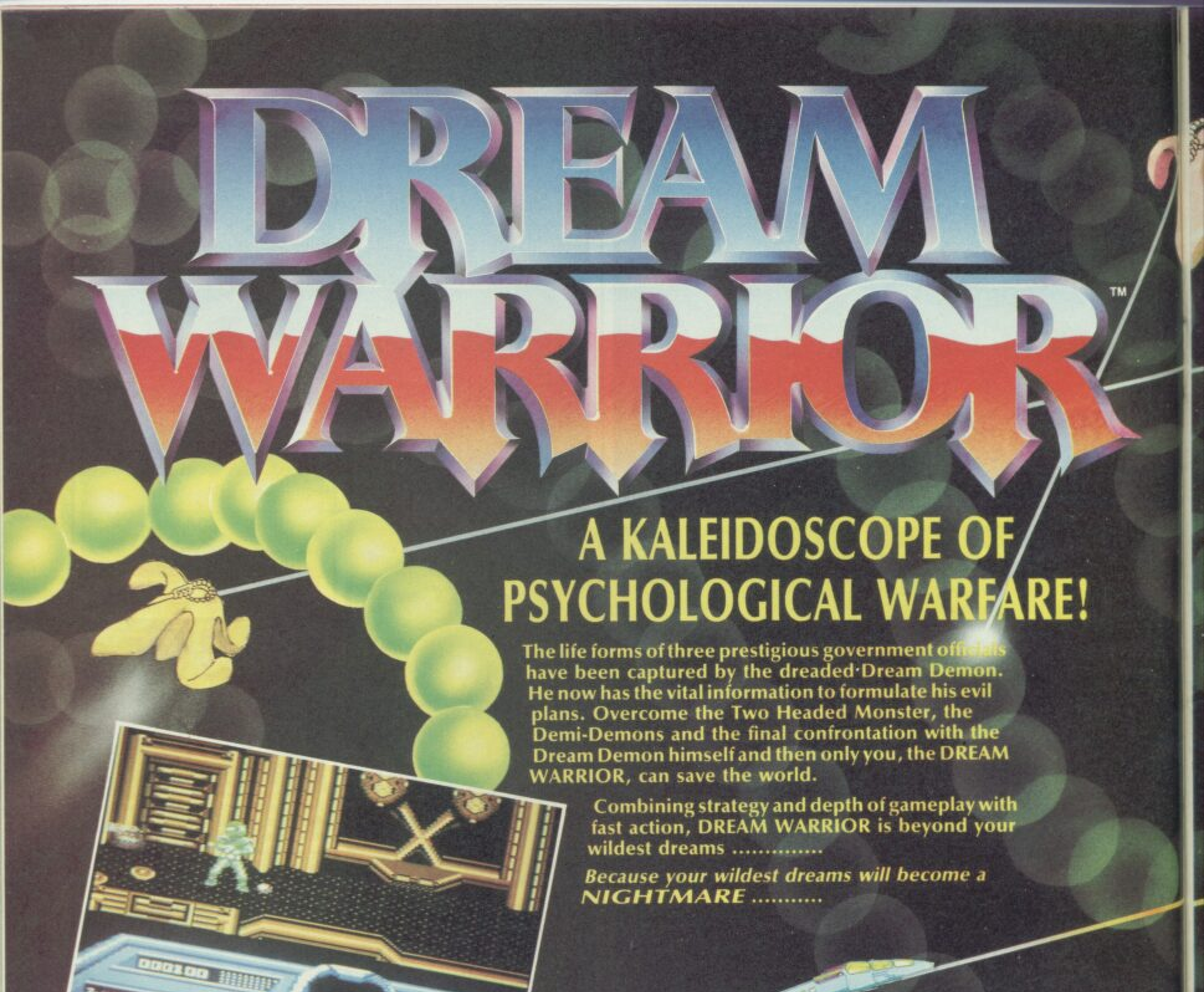
Side Kick scales one of the 69, thousand million possible screens in Action Force II *on the Spectrum*



Attacking the opponent in Go!'s Street Fighter *– Spectrum screen*

Revealing fun from Anco's girlie version of Strip Poker II *(that's for boys, the boysie version for girls comes later) – Amiga screen*





A KALEIDOSCOPE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE!

The life forms of three prestigious government officials have been captured by the dreaded Dream Demon. He now has the vital information to formulate his evil plans. Overcome the Two Headed Monster, the Demi-Demons and the final confrontation with the Dream Demon himself and then only you, the DREAM WARRIOR, can save the world.

Combining strategy and depth of gameplay with fast action, DREAM WARRIOR is beyond your wildest dreams ....

Because your wildest dreams will become a ***NIGHTMARE ....***

Screen shots from CBM 64/128 version.



	Tape	Disk
CBM 64/128	£9.99	£11.99
Spectrum	£8.99	
Amstrad	£9.99	£14.99
IBM PC		£19.99

U.S. Gold Ltd., Units 2/3 Holford Way,
Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX. Tel: (021) 356 3388
U.S. GOLD

Time and magik

The trilogy



Interactive fiction from *Level 9*

Three of Level 9's most acclaimed adventures – Lords of Time, Red Moon and The Price of Magik – come together in one package. Each has been enhanced and enlarged with more text than ever before – 60,000 mind-expanding words creating magik and mystery round every corner. There's a powerful new parser, and most disc versions include stunning digitised pictures that help to dramatically heighten the atmosphere.

What the press have said:

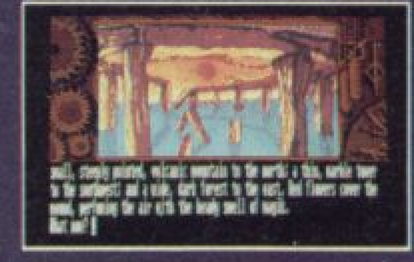
LORDS OF TIME: ***"Destined to become a classic"*** – *Computing with the Amstrad.*

RED MOON: ***Best Graphical Adventure or Best Adventure of the Year*** – *Zzap 64, Crash, Amtix, C&VG, CCI, and Amstrad Computer User.*

THE PRICE OF MAGIK: ***"Another superb adventure . . . their best yet"*** – *Commodore User. Also a Crash Smash.*







Screen shots from Atari ST version

Spectrum (cassette) Plus 3 (disc) Commodore 64 (cassette or disc) Amstrad CPC (cassette or disc) Atari XL/XE (cassette or disc) Amstrad PCW (disc) Apple II (disc)	Atari ST Commodore Amiga Macintosh Amstrad PC, IBM PC and compatibles
£14.95	**£19.95**

Available from all good stockists or order direct by sending a cheque or postal order made payable to Mandarin, together with your name and address. Price includes P&P. Access/Visa owners: Phone our hotline or send your card number with your order.



Europa House, Adlington Park,
Adlington, Macclesfield SK10 4NP.

ENQUIRIES: 0625 878888 ORDER HOTLINE: 0625 879920

WEE JOBBIES

We take it for granted that software personalities spring fully-made into the public glare of limelight, but Mel Croucher knows better . . .

The recent Computer Arena 88 (for more details see item in news, page 9) proved to me yet again that not only is everyone involved with the software industry a complete loony, but that they are also extremely likeable people; if I had tried to invent this month's little investigation, I doubt if I could have come up with a stranger collection of true confessions. So here they are folks, the little seedlings from which the flowers of British computing grew, the spontaneous answers to my simple question: 'Hello darling, tell me about your first wee jobbie'.



A fascinating background in rubber inflatables – Loriciel's Nikki Penny

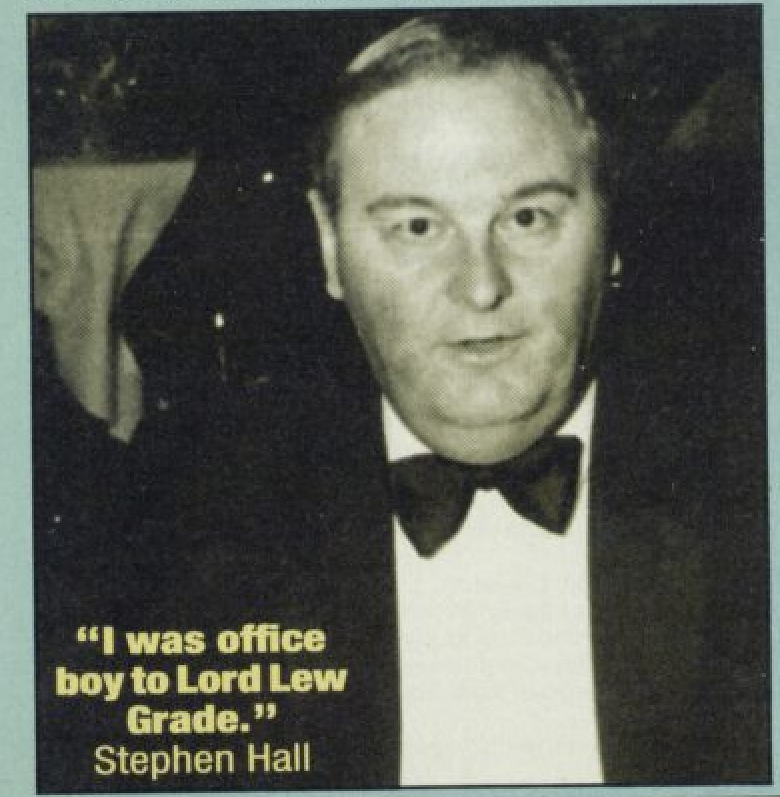
PAULINE GARSDEN
Leather Goddess of Infogrames

MEL: Hello Darling, tell me about your first wee jobbie.
PAULINE: The first time, eh? You never forget your first time, do you Mel. Yes, I used to pack groceries in my father's shop.
MEL: So did Margaret Thatcher. How old were you?
PAULINE: Three! And you're right, I went on to a major position serving the Conservative Club.
MEL: What doing?
PAULINE: When I was 15 I was their alcohol dispensary executive.
MEL: You mean you were an illegally employed, underaged barmaid.
PAULINE: Spot on. But my first full-time job was as a secretary in the textile business. I suppose that's a form of software. In fact I spent quite a lot of time in the rag trade. I can still measure you for a suit just by looking at you.
MEL: I dare you.
PAULINE: Thirty-one and a half inside leg, and you dress on the left.
MEL: I am humbled at your skill, and must close this interview in not a little confusion.

STEPHEN HALL
Grand Slam Supremo

MEL: Hello Darling, tell me about your first wee jobbie, I mean before you were so impressed you bought the company.
STEPHEN: I worked at Harrods.
MEL: Yes, that's very impressive.
STEPHEN: Yeah, my job was to stick down the envelopes. I lasted half a day: ran out of spit! Then I became an office boy.
MEL: Not a very glamorous beginning, if I may say so.
STEPHEN: Well that's where you're wrong, mate. You see, I was office boy to Lord Lew Grade. That was in 1968, after I graduated from business school. Not glamorous! You're joking. Those were the days of *Danger Man*, *The Saint*, when ATV was at is height, the most successful slice of the entertainment industry.
MEL: So Lew Greed taught you all you know.
STEPHEN: Wrong again. He shattered all by business illusions overnight. He turned round and told me I was a schmuck.
MEL: I could have told you that.
STEPHEN: I can't decide whether to invite you to lunch or get my lawyer to pay you a visit. Yeah, it was an amazing time and place to start out my working life, we were involved with the Palladium, Drury Lane, the great Bowling Alley Boom, oh yes, and I was involved when the group purchased an outfit called Lenmac. Do you know who they were?
MEL: Tell me, Stephen.
STEPHEN: Oh, I thought you might have heard of them, John Lennon and Paul McCartney. Software? To me it's all part of the same thing, software is simply another extension of the entertainment business that I've grown up with. It's all showbiz.

He was so impressed with the company, he bought it – Stephen Hall



"I was office boy to Lord Lew Grade."
Stephen Hall

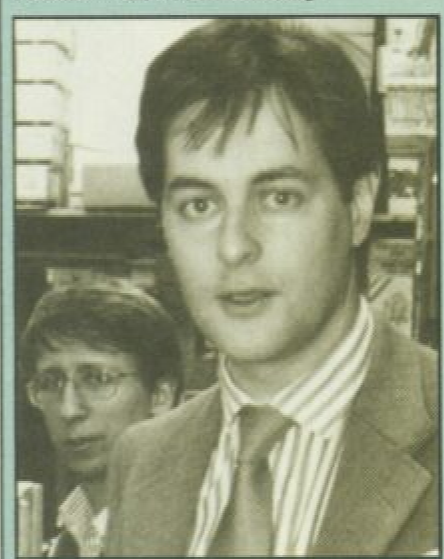
NIKKI PENNY
Thrusting Figurehead of Loriciel

MEL: Hello Darling, thank you for not taking me to court over this month's Mercy Dash, and tell me about your first wee jobbie.
NIKKI: Are you ready for this? Okay, here goes. Deep breath and tell all: I used to be employed by a well known manufacturer of rubber goods, and prior to that I was deeply into promotional inflatables, known as Windy Balloons!
MEL: entire paragraph removed on grounds of self indulgence, bad spelling and even worse taste, (The Editor)
NIKKI: No, they were bigger than that, 25-foot long blimps, rubber dirigibles.
MEL: Buddyell! Did you model for them, or simply blow into them to achieve the necessary inflation?
NIKKI: My function was as the designer, and I didn't have to wrap my lips around them. We just shoved a vacuum cleaner up them and threw it into reverse.
MEL: Well, I suppose that was yet another kind of software. Tell me something, were you trained for all this?
NIKKI: Yes, in visual communications at Wolverhampton Poly, I also had a post-grad in marketing.
MEL: Has your fascinating experience in rubber inflatables got anything to do with the artwork for *Mach 3*?
NIKKI: Oh yes. But you can only see a very small section of nipple.
MEL: Nipple. Quite so. You also did a spot of teaching, I believe.
NIKKI: That's right. Six months. Teaching programmes for ex-offenders, youth custody, but mainly for junior schools. I'm sorry to say that I had no patience with sticky-fingered



little boys who wanted to sit on my knee.
MEL: Sorry, I'll get off. By the way, what's that perfume you're wearing?
NIKKI: *Pisartist* . . . spelled with a Y.

Never a penny less after a Penny More – debonaire Dominic Wheatley



DOMINIC WHEATLEY
The baritone half of Domark

MEL: Hello Darling, tell me about your first wee jobbie.
DOMINIC: My first honest penny, dear boy? Passing round the champers in a French chateau for Moet & Chandon. Dreadfully hard work, of course, all that Dom Perignon and caviar, entertaining visiting Japanese and Americans. I often wondered how I could ever keep it up, once I'd got used to the good life, don't you know.
MEL: How terrible, that must have been extremely difficult work. But have you ever had any really hard times?
DOMINIC: When I was in the army.
MEL: Which regiment?
DOMINIC: The Irish Guards, marching up an down outside Buckingham Palace in a funny hat, you get the picture? Dropping in for a bite of lunch with the Royals.
MEL: Yes, I suppose that could be hard work.
DOMINIC: No, that wasn't the hard bit. The hard bit was carrying an Armalite rifle through the jungles of Belize, riddled with worms that I'd caught off pigs.
MEL: The jungles were riddled with worms?
DOMINIC: Oh no, I was riddled with worms, the worms were breeding in me.
MEL: Um, Dominic, would you mind passing the sick bag . . . ?

JIM MACKONOCHIE
Managing Director and sweettalker, Mirrorsoft

MEL: Hello Darling, tell me about your first wee jobbie.
JIM: I never give interviews.
MEL: But I owe you a favour.
JIM: Oh, well in that case, how can I refuse you? I joined the Royal Navy. Second Lieutenant, sweating around the Persian Gulf, Mombassa, cradling a sten gun around Aden.
MEL: Did you see any action?
JIM: I am glad to say no!
MEL: Dominic Wheatley tells me he caught worms when he was in the Services. Did you catch anything printable?
JIM: As a matter of fact, I caught snakes.
MEL: Snakes?!
JIM: I was on a jungle survival course, and mighty hungry. I caught snakes and ate them.
MEL: And were they revolting?
JIM: Not at all, they were rather good.

On familiar terms with Tutenkhamen – Andrew Hewson



ANDREW HEWSON
Eponymous silent man of Hewson Ltd

MEL: Hello Darling, tell me about your first wee jobbie.
ANDREW: South End Seafront.
MEL: Don't tell me: you were the deck-chair attendant.
ANDREW: Oh much better than that. I was the bingo caller. It cost the little old ladies a tenner a go, and I wasn't getting paid much more.
MEL: When was the first time you ever got a fiver in your hand?
ANDREW: Yes, I can remember that, it was when I was cutting grass for the Council.
MEL: But then you started knocking around with some famous people. Tutenkhamen and Jesus Christ, wasn't it?
ANDREW: I worked at the British Museum for seven years doing radio carbon dating, and you're right, I handled the Tutenkhamen stuff, bits of dead bodies. But I never got the Curse of the Mummy's Tomb as far as I know. And yes, we used to get phone calls from the Society For the Turin Shroud wanting us to prove that Jesus left his photographic negative all over it.
MEL: How far back did your radio carbon techniques take you.
ANDREW: All the way. Neolithic flint mines, I even wrote a paper that was published in *Nature* about my work on prehistoric deer antlers.
MEL: So how on earth did you get into computers?
ANDREW: Under the earth, actually. When I started at the British Museum there wasn't a single computer in the place. By the time I left there must have been 40 or 50 of them, I became totally fascinated.
MEL: And the rest, to coin a phrase, is history.





From philatelist to paternalism, Incentive's Ian Andrew is expecting a baby (well, his wife Helen is)

IAN ANDREW
Father-to-be of Incentive Software

MEL: Hello Darling, tell me about your first wee jobbie.
IAN: I was the tea boy for Stanley Gibbons, the stamp dealers.
MEL: You should have got together with Stephen Hall, he used to stick down envelopes. What was your first real responsibility?
IAN: I was an insurance clerk for the Commercial Union, but I soon started my own business, specialist stuff for collectors of Post Office picture post cards.
MEL: You had your own premises?
IAN: Sure, but I soon discovered that I had got into a dead end, so I converted the shop overnight, and became a software house. It must have confused the shoppers. I only had one program, my entire stock consisted of that single title for sale, *Splat!*, and I put a seven-foot-high poster in the window with that single word on it. And in a word, that's it!

The strong-arm strategist – Tricia Peters of CCS



TRICIA PETERS
Highest profile of CCS

MEL: Hello Darling, tell me about your first wee jobbie.
TRICIA: Hells teeth! Well, yes I remember. I'll tell you. Do you know Sandbanks, in Poole Harbour. I was the little girl on the little ferry.
MEL: You were paddling it?
TRICIA: I am renowned for my very strong arm muscles, but in actual fact I worked ten hours a day giving out the tickets to horrible adults and spotty little kids.
MEL: So you started out as a clippie. How did you become dependent on alcohol?
TRICIA: Ha ha. I had my own company in the wine trade, before computers came along.
MEL: Treading grapes, or did your arm muscles come into play then?
TRICIA: I only trod them when I was desperate, but yes, I used to heave a lot of heavy cases of booze about.
MEL: And are you still heaving?
TRICIA: I decided to throw my weight behind the software industry, I thought there might be more money for less heaving.
MEL: Thank you.
TRICIA: Cheers.

"I handled bits of dead bodies."
Andrew Hewson



Paul Cooper, a man with a choice who worked illegally

PAUL COOPER
The man behind and in front of Thalamus

MEL: Hello Darling, tell me about your first wee jobbie.
PAUL: Oh ******* ****! Yes, I remember! As a cleaner at British Caledonian, Gatwick Airport. They never forget you have a choice, you know, and I was 14 years old.
MEL: Illegal?
PAUL: 'Course it was illegal! And I was earning a bomb for a kid in those days, 40 to 50 quid a day. I wish I was earning that much today!
MEL: Don't we all. Did you stick to high flying?
PAUL: Oh yeah, I spent several years as an aircraft engineer down at the Hamble Pilot Training Centre, tickling Cherokees. Matter of fact I spent another year at Luton Airport, but I never met Lorraine Chaise.
MEL: Thanks for that fascinating story, Paul.
PAUL: See you in the India Arms, you old ****.

JACK SCHOFIELD
Computer Editor The Guardian

MEL: Hello Darling, tell me about your first wee jobbie. After all, you are the most important and influential computer journalist in the Kingdom.
JACK: I started out as assistant editor on a photographic magazine called *Better Technique*. Then I . . .
MEL: Zzzzzzzzz . . .

ROD COUSENS
Peripatetic god-king of Activision

MEL: Hello Darling, tell me about your first wee jobbie.
SYNTHETIC VOICE: Mr Cousens is not available, this is his security system speaking, and if that's bloody you Croucher, sod off, I am connected direct to Mr Cousens' legal advisers.
MEL: Hang on a sec, while I boot up my patent superhacker, tumble a few passwords, switch on the Vocoder-emulator, and . . . hello, this is Rod Cousens speaking. Hard copy please, my Curriculum Vitae.
DOT MATRIX PRINTER: Rodney Peter Cousens, born: 21.11.50. Education: Alexandra Grammar School, Singapore. 'O' Levels: Woodwork, Metalwork, Technical Drawing, Pure Maths, English Language, English Literature. 'A' Levels: Woodwork, Pure Maths. Shoreditch College of Education, teachers training college. First Employment, 1970-75, Accountant, Carl Ziegler Yacht Agency, Hamble, Hampshire . . .
MEL: Program interrupt. Amend Curriculum Vitae data as follows: (heh heh) real name: Rodney Waldheim. Education: Greta Garbo Home for wayward boys and girls. Criminal Record: . . .

FRANCIS LEE
A song a dance a Destiny Software

MEL: Hello Darling, tell me about your first wee jobbie.
FRANCIS: Carpet porter in Cheesemans, but I thought there must be something better in life than this.
MEL: What could be better?
FRANCIS: Assistant fishmonger, guts and fins and scaly scales, but after three months I thought there must be something better in life than this.
MEL: But what could be better?
FRANCIS: Clerical Officer in the Civil Service, but I thought there must be something better in life than this.
MEL: And then . . .
FRANCIS: And then rock'n'roll, the music business, I never looked back.

LESLIE MANSFORD
The Veronica Lake of Electronic Arts

MEL: Hello Darling, tell me about your first wee jobbie.
LESLIE: Goodness!
MEL: You were a nun!
LESLIE: No, I was a security guard! Half a day's training in unarmed combat, and I was sent into the Barbican to stop people slashing the Picassos. The uniform was nice though.
MEL: Terrifying. What then?
LESLIE: I was a waitress in a hotel in Switzerland; the unarmed combat came in very useful there too. Then I became an au pair girl in Hamburg.
MEL: Spell 'Reeperbahn' . . . Um, are you smoking, Leslie?
LESLIE: No Mel, I'm heavy breathing.

ASHLEY HILDEBRANDT
The power behind The Power House

MEL: Hello Darling, tell me about your first wee jobbie.
ASHLEY: Let me think now, what was I doing last week? Ah yes, I was with CRL.
MEL: No, I mean what was the first job you ever had?
ASHLEY: I just told you, I worked for CRL.
MEL: No, no. What other jobs did you have after leaving school or university, you know what I mean: paperboy, postman, pimp, politician . . .
ASHLEY: The only job I ever had in my entire life before now was with CRL.
MEL: Well **** a ****! Congratulations! You are the only person in British computing software that I have spoken to who has never dirtied themselves with anything else.

"I thought there must be something better in life than this."
Francis Lee



From a life of petty crime, Simon Harvey has come a long way . . .

Unarmed combat got her a job at Electronic Arts – Leslie Mansford



Ashley Hildebrandt, the power behind The Power House

"I was sent in to stop people slashing the Picassos."
Leslie Mansford

ASHLEY: Then you should ask Clem Chambers what he used to do. Just a minute, I promised myself never to do an interview with you ever again after your Sex'n'violence bit in THE GAMES MACHINE . . . byeee!

CLEMENT CHAMBERS
Full frontal vunderkind of CRL

MEL: Hello Darling, tell me about your first wee jobbie.
CLEMENT: CRL.
MEL: Before CRL?
CLEMENT: Absolutely sod all. No other job of any description. I have never worked for anyone else for any wage or salary.
MEL: But I've seen some very credible drawings executed by your fair hand. Weren't you an artist at one stage?
CLEMENT: I always wanted to do fine art, yes. But it just didn't work out that way. Have a nice time in Czechoslovakia.

SIMON HARVEY
Coxcomb of Headlice PR

MEL: Hello Darling, tell me about your first wee jobbie.
SIMON: Hello Darling, I used to do Josephine's every Saturday afternoon, when I was 14 years old.
MEL: That's disgusting.
SIMON: It was. Josephine's was a newsagents, and I served sweeties, fags and porno magazines, as well as nicking the odd Yorkie Bar (but don't tell Josephine.) I smashed the bathroom window, but I never got my balls back.
MEL: So what was your second wee jobbie?
SIMON: The Hitchin branch of Safeways, mopping up spilled milk and kid's puke, and humping fat women's shopping bags. There was a sign that told them not to give tips, but I took all I could get. I worked on a building site too, in the summer of '83, and it taught me a lot.
MEL: What did it teach you?
SIMON: Never, ever to buy a used house from anyone.

JEFF MINTER
The genial shaman of Llamasoft

MEL: Hello Darling, tell me about your first wee jobbie.
JEFF: Oh, well, yeah, no, yeah, cleaning the bogs in a fork-lift truck factory. Yeah, 1978. I saved up enough for my first video console.
MEL: Then you worked down on the farm, didn't you?
JEFF: Right, that was a drag. Cycling 20 miles a day. Silly. There were no beasties unfortunately, I would have liked some beasties, but I was on this planting machine, it was pretty boring.
MEL: Thanks Jeff, I'll let you get up now.
JEFF: Yeah, thanks, I suppose I'd better get up. By the way, I read one of your articles the other day.
MEL: Oh, what did you think?
JEFF: Yeah, you nearly got a fact right.

PROVE YOU'RE THE BEST IN BRITAIN!

IN THE FIRST EVER NATIONAL COMPUTER GAMES CHAMPIONSHIPS

(THEY'RE ARE ALMOST UPON US!)

SHOW THE WORLD WHAT YOU'RE MADE OF . . .

Arranged by the publishers of THE GAMES MACHINE, the National Computer Games Championships are the first of their kind to be held in Britain. Compete in the region of your choice on either Spectrum or Commodore 64/128 for the first round – and if you make it through the semi-finals you can fight it out, expenses paid, at the exciting finals at this year's Earls Court Personal Computer Show! Fame before the whole world and big prizes for the two champions!

MAKE YOUR JOYSTICK COUNT . . .

Fill in the coupon now – loads of CRASH and ZZAP! readers are doing the same! Closing date for entries is May 23.

VENUES

For all the fine print detailing entry rules and controlling regulations of this exciting championship, see last month's TGM. We now have details of the six first-round venues:

(Midlands)
BIRMINGHAM SPORTS CENTRE
201 Balsall Heath Road
Highgate
Birmingham B29 9DL

(SW/Wales)
NAILSWORTH BOYS CLUB
Bath Road
Nailsworth, Nr Stroud
Gloucestershire

(N. Ireland)
SEALINK FERRY 'ST DAVID'
LARNE - STRANRAER
(full details will be supplied to selected contestants)

(Scotland)
FETTE-LORRE BOYS CLUB
Orchard Brae
Edinburgh

(North)
HUNSLET BOYS CLUB
Hillidge Road
Leeds LS10 1BP

(London/SE)
ST ANDREWS BOYS CLUB
12 Old Pye Street
Westminster
London SW1

All days are Saturdays – start times are 10.00am except the Sealink Ferry 'St David'. Selected competitors will be notified in plenty of time.

NATIONAL COMPUTER GAMES CHAMPIONSHIP ENTRY FORM

Please write clearly, using block capitals.

I wish to put my name forward to qualify as a competitor. If selected to compete, I agree to abide by the championship regulations.

Name ....
Address ....
....
.... Postcode ....
Telephone ....

Please tick the appropriate box:
I wish to compete on the Spectrum: ☐
I wish to compete on the Commodore: ☐
I am aged 18 or over: ☐
I am aged under 18: ☐ If you are under 18, your parent or legal guardian must sign here and print their name below:
Parent's Signature ....
Parent's Name ....

Please tick the regional heat venue you would like to attend
☐ Birmingham
☐ Gloucester
☐ Belfast (Larne-Stranraer Ferry)
☐ Edinburgh
☐ Leeds
☐ London

In case for any reason you are asked to attend a venue other than the one you have already selected, please tick the next best alternative for you:
☐ Birmingham
☐ Gloucester
☐ Belfast
☐ Edinburgh
☐ Leeds
☐ London

In order to help us determine whether you should qualify to enter, please give **EITHER** your high score on **two** of the following five US Gold games:

OUT RUN high score is: ....
INDIANA JONES high score is: ....
720° high score is: ....
GAUNTLET II high score is: ....
RYGAR high score is: ....

OR your best score on two of your favourite arcade coin-op machines:

1 Coin-op name is: .... high score is: ....
2 Coin-op name is: .... high score is: ....

Complete the form and send it to **THE ORGANISER, NATIONAL COMPUTER GAMES CHAMPIONSHIP, NEWSFIELD LIMITED, PO BOX 20, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB.** Successful applicants will be contacted in plenty of time. Please do not ring or write to ask, it only blocks up the phone lines! And good luck!

GOING, GOING, NEARLY GONE!
YOUR LAST CHANCE TO WIN AN AMIGA A500 AND MONITOR

TGM readers have gathered that the Amiga is an amazing machine

Here it is, the final chance in this series of three for one lucky reader to win a brand new Amiga A500 complete with 1081 monitor. Yes, three Amigas we've had, and so far, two given away. Who will win this month? It could be YOU!

If you're an 8-bit owner, now's your chance to upgrade, and if you already own an Amiga, why then win one for your left hand. The first two competitions resulted in simply floods of entries, and it is no exaggeration to say that our post room was awash with hopeful envelopes. Obviously, over the past few months TGM readers have gathered that the Amiga is an amazing machine with strong capabilities for producing quality graphics, stereo sound and for running, games and stunning utilities. In fact the phrase 'I've got an Amiga' now surpasses 'I've got a copy of *Spycatcher*' in social circles. Anyway, what you all want to know is . . .

HOW TO WIN THE AMIGA

A combination of cryptic clues and a word-search forms this month's brain teaser. Hidden within the box of 156 letters are the names of 12 famous computers, some old, some new, some almost forgotten and several in blue. Now, we're not expecting you to find them without any help, so there are 12 cryptic clues which correspond to the names of the hidden computers.

Having discovered the 12 mystery identities, ring them round in an obvious way (you can photocopy the coupon if you prefer), fill in all the details and send the whole caboodle to: **AMIGA COMP III, THE GAMES MACHINE, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*.** Entries must arrive here by first post on May 19 and the first one picked out of the specially parked Ludlow Council skip outside wins. All entrants must abide by the standard competition rules detailed in the masthead – anyone found not doing so will be thoroughly blittered.

CRYPTIC CLUES

Suss 'em out and find 'em:

- A colourful machine from 1982 now with a sugary taste
- Everybody's favourite shoe box, and the name of a zzappy band
- A computer with links to a wild cat
- Jack's 16-bit machine
- Just what do you want to win?
- 'ello Tosh, gotta a Japanese import?
- Of Alan Michael Sugar Trading
- One of the later international business machines – just the initials
- A fiery machine, Welsh in origin, most popular in its 32K format
- Sir Clive counted his quark-quarks before he took the leap
- Atmospheric Spectrum rival came in two forms
- Scotty beamed aboard a flan



E	T	I	F	N	M	I	G	B	T	H	E
N	S	R	R	O	K	I	R	E	S	C	E
T	X	T	Y	L	S	X	R	C	I	O	L
L	H	A	B	E	U	S	O	I	R	M	L
O	S	S	A	G	I	M	A	I	A	O	O
O	P	T	I	B	M	P	C	B	T	D	A
H	E	S	R	O	X	N	Y	L	A	O	A
P	C	Q	D	B	S	U	M	Q	K	R	N
E	T	O	R	I	K	O	O	M	L	O	S
L	R	T	S	I	A	R	T	A	G	S	T
E	U	D	A	R	T	S	M	A	P	C	R
L	M	E	S	I	R	P	R	E	T	N	E
M	S	K	M	M	D	D	E	G	A	R	D

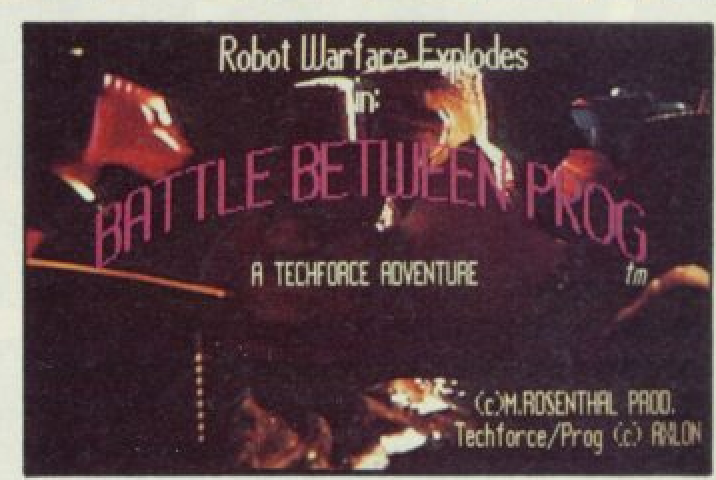
Name ....

Address ....

....

.... Postcode ....

BATTLE BETWEEN PROG



An amazing, new, interactive techno-toy is taking America by storm. Our New York correspondent, Marshal M Rosenthal, tells the story of Axlon's TECHFORCE fighting robots in the form of a photoplay . . .

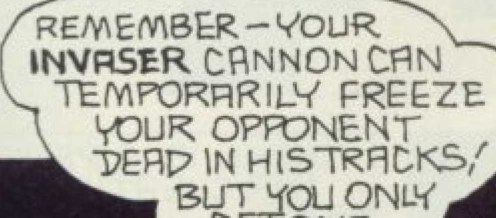


















PRESS ANY KEY

GAME COMMENCES...

RED MUST BE HERE SOMEWHERE!

THAT BLUE PROG'S AS BLIND AS A BAT...

AAOOH!

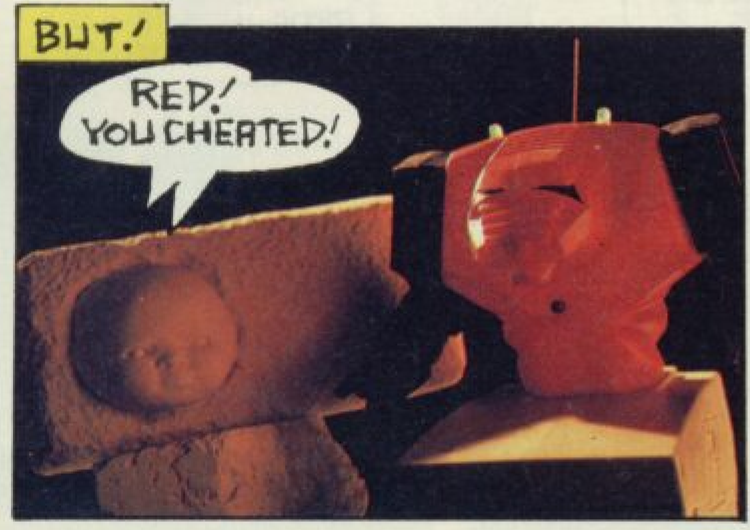
URK!

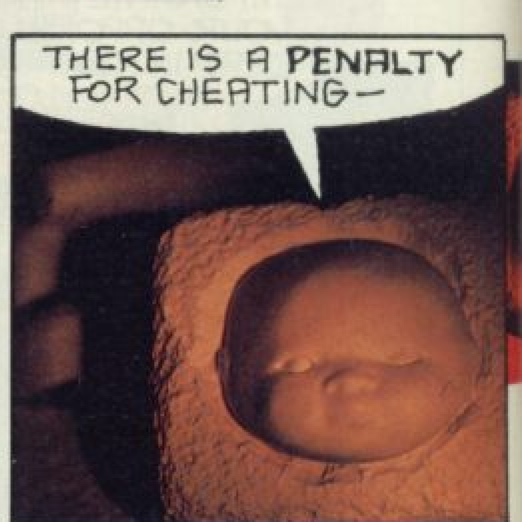
I HAVE TO STOP HIM – HMMM...

RATS – I MISSED!

RED ALMOST GOT ME – BETTER TRY A SHORT CUT!








OH NO.!
INVASER FIRE COMING RIGHT UP!
BLUE'S GOT THE BALL!
RED'S ALREADY RECOVERING! I BETTER HURRY—
THERE'S THAT RED SON OF A PROG!
LET'S SEE HOW HE LIKES AN INVASER BLAST...
A PILE OF ROCKS...
ROCKSLIDE!!
THIS OUGHT TO SLOW BLUE DOWN-
AAAH!
THE BLUE PROG IS THE WINNER!
THUS ENDS ANOTHER DAY ON THE PLANET KRIM-BABA...
AAIEEEE!!!
THE END
Produced/Photography
MARSHAL M. ROSENTHAL
Scenery/Design
LOUIE VOLPE for
FRACTURES U.S.A.
Special Effects
STEVE STOROZUM
PRESS ANY KEY

BATTLE BETWEEN PROG

Axlon's TECHFORCE explained

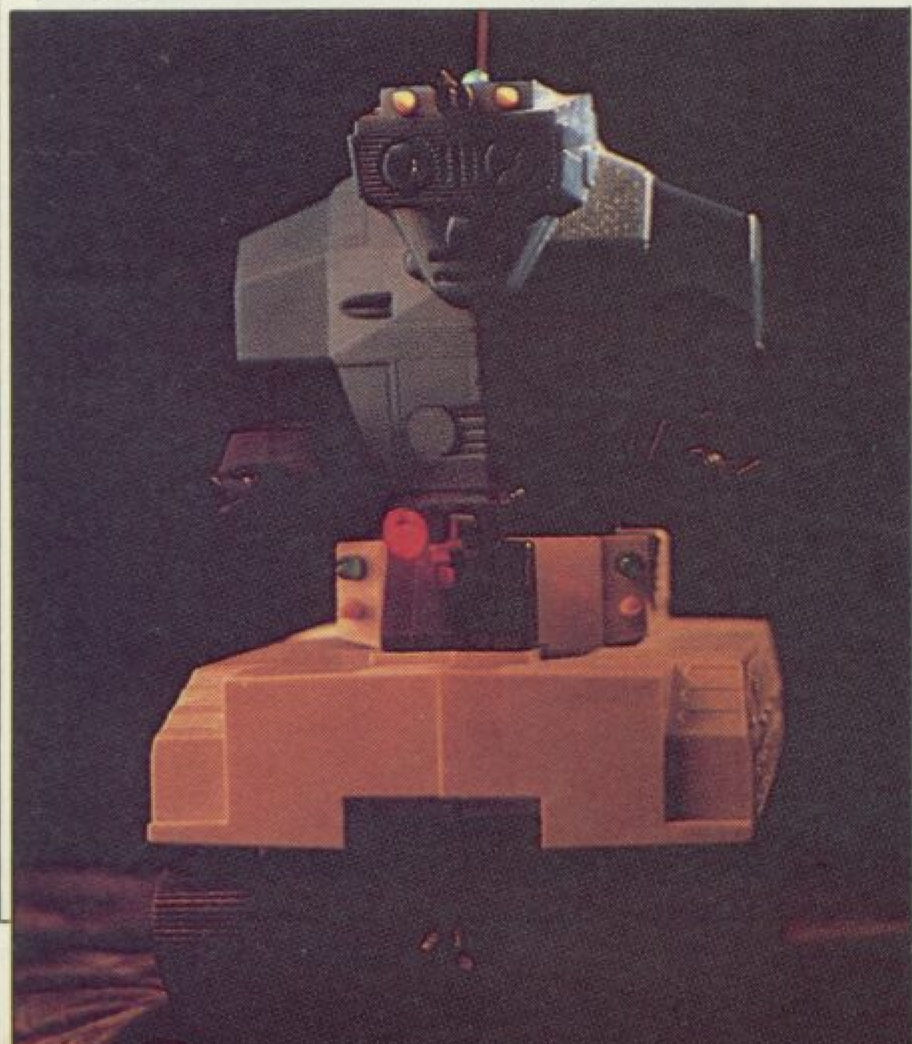
Blue may have won this encounter, but who knows what will happen when *you* take over control of the **Red** team? In order to do that – we had better check you out on the TECHFORCE setup. And keep in mind that this high-tech toy comes from Nolan Bushnell, the man who created *Pong* and started Atari.

The heart of the system is the Drive Base. This combination motorised tank and electronic nerve centre receives its instructions by remote control from either of the two Command Consoles (more about this later). Each base has a front mounted *invaser* cannon of awesome power. Special *perceptors*, which are also on each Drive Base, react to the *invaser*'s invisible infrared beam when hit. This causes the Base to be deactivated for a short time. Normally, one of the two PROG (Programmable) Robot shells, Red - Demon/Blue - Protector, are placed onto a Drive Base. An internal connector mates them, and also activates lights on the Robot which flash when an *invaser* beam strikes true.

A Drive Base Cap can also be placed onto the Base. It features a special surface which holds Lego tm type building blocks, so that you can make your own kind of robot or fighting figure. A set of ID tags complete the PROG, and these attach by velcro hooks to the robot's back.

Why is it so important to have the PROGs tagged? Because the real test comes when you take charge. For this, there are two Command Consoles – both which use radio-frequency (RF) to send commands to the Drive Bases. As each Base has a rotating ident dial in the bottom – it is possible to combine commands to control up to 16 PROGs simultaneously, or in any configuration that you choose. Keyboard buttons on the Command Console can be used, or plug in the ever popular joystick. You can switch between PROGs, create elaborate patterns, even commit them to the console's computer memory to carry out. Electronic beeps echo each command input, and there are even built-in battle formations ready to be put into effect with a press of a button. Plus switches designed for future enhancements. Batteries power everything, from the four C batteries of the Main Console to the eight AA batteries of each Drive Base (the second Console derives its power from the Main unit).

The basic kit consists of the two Command Bases, two Drive Bases, and four Robot Shells: two each of Red and Blue. Also included are three Battle Barriers and two Energy Crystals, one green and one orange. The instruction manual also includes a variety of game setups, and the whole shebang even comes with an exciting comic book about the PROGs' adventures.



AXLON, ***252 Humbolt Avenue, Sunnyvale, California 94089***
Retail price of basic unit: $280.00 US

" . . . it is possible to combine commands to control up to 16 PROGs simultaneusly . . . "

ABOUT 'BATTLE BETWEEN PROG'

IT IS always hard to 'show' a game in progress, especially if there is a lot of action and spontaneity which can be destroyed in a controlled setting. *Battle Between Prog* went the route of a photoplay, becoming a sort of high-tech Punch and Judy show. Daylight-balanced tungsten lights were used so that each shot could be viewed exactly as it would appear. A 35mm camera with a macro (closeup) lens was mounted on a tripod and combined with Ektachrome ISO 100 slide film. A fast film wasn't necessary since most of the exposures were taken between 1/4 and 1 second (a cable release was a necessity however). Each shot was lined up by consulting a story-board: a series of drawn images that told the entire story.

The special effects were a hoot to do. Since infrared beams are invisible, we cheated by using a low-powered industrial laser. To see the beam required more than just absolute darkness (the entire set had a black curtain running around it). There needed to be dust in the air for the laser beam to show, and you can just imagine how enjoyable it was doing over 30 'takes' while blowing chalk dust into the path of the beam – with no lights on at all, and different exposures being timed by counting 'one-one thousand, two-one thousand . . . '. Not to mention the thrill of cleaning it all up afterwards. And remember, it is very dangerous to look directly into the beam of a laser . . . this includes the lens of a camera as well.

Babyface's destruction of the Red PROG was easier on the lungs, but still a bit tricky. A magician uses a special kind of tissue called Flash Paper, which burn very fast in a burst of yellow light. It looks a lot hotter than it really is, which was good since the PROG had to be returned to Axlon afterwards still (somewhat) in good condition. Pieces of Flash Paper were wadded up, and a small fuse made from it that was ignited with a punk (not a person). Varying the exposures was vital, since it wasn't possible to really tell how the flash would appear.

Once the slides were processed, all that needed to be done were the opening and closing credits. The two chosen slides were Genlocked (video-interfaced) through a video camera into an Amiga computer. Graphics were added, and the whole business was then photographed.

Battle Between Prog was produced, written and photographed by **Marshal M Rosenthal**
Art design/layout by **Louie Volpe**
Set provided by **Fractures USA**
Special effects by **Steve Storozum**

Marshal M Rosenthal is a New-York based photographer and writer whose work takes him throughout the world. Rosenthal's latest project, THE IMAGINATION WORKSHOP, is a cable show featuring the creative output of young people in all aspects of the visual arts. This is his first visit to the planet Krim-Baba.

DOUBLE-O'S BACK IN TOWN

In his final report from the International Toy & Hobby Fair, John Gilbert assesses the impact of microchip technology on trains and spiders.

Plastic has replaced wood in Toy Town. A company's survival depends as much on its sleek plastic image, colourful logos and the tales behind its toys as it does on moulded Bakelite product. If you miss out on *Masters Of The Universe* or Lasertag, all the philosophy behind them, you might as well apply for bankruptcy.

One of the big success stories of this year's International Toy and Hobby Fair, at Earls Court, was the success of a company which, less than six years ago, was facing financial ruin. It had relied on two types of traditional toy, the Triang train set and the Scalextric racing car, for almost 70 years. Suddenly computers, in the form of Sinclair Research, were in and Hornby's train's were stranded in the long, dark, tunnel of archaism.

Hornby, however – unlike Sinclair Research – is still a toy industry success story. Its long haul out of relative obscurity and into the bleeping lightshow age of electronic product demonstrates the volatility of the toy industry.

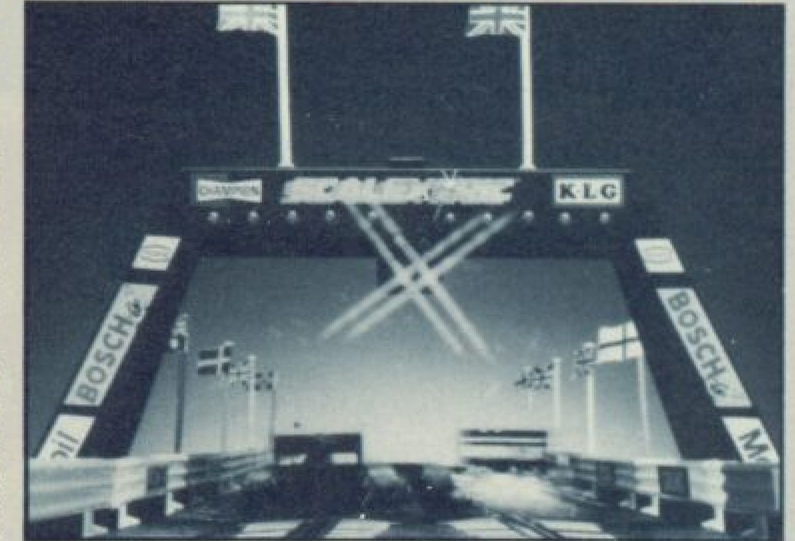
The company's change in fortune started in late 1982 with a management buyout. The new team saw the need to diversify from its train and track product lines and within two years had moved into the girls' toy market with Flower Fairies, a range of posable dolls created from the drawings of Cicely Mary Barker. Those were followed, in 1985, by a bunch of floppy-eared dogs, called Pound Puppies.

It wasn't until late 1985/86 that Hornby ventured into the toy train market again with Thomas The Tank Engine, a range of steam locomotives which re-awakened interest in trains. At the same time a resurgence of interest in motor racing was responsible for pushing up sales of Scalextric. By then, Hornby was interested in combining technology with its trains and race-track to add realism.

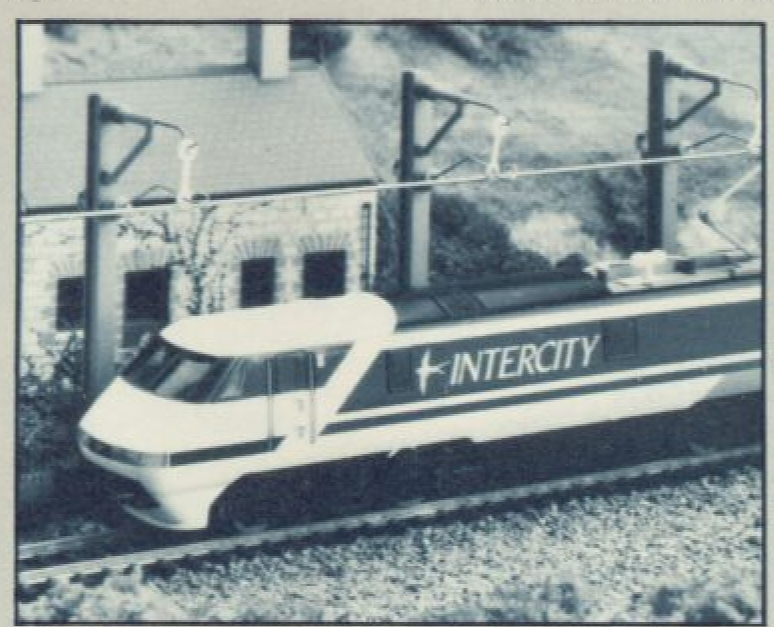
ON TRACK

Computerised control boxes and attention to detail mark the Hornby train releases for 1988. The long-awaited **System 90** provides high power for the newer InterCity models – which in reality can reach speeds of 130mph. It also introduces a set of two hand-held controllers and a complex Catenary system which allows two trains to run on the same track, one using electricity from the rails and the other using an overhead wire system.

The overhead power system is used by the latest of Hornby's model engines, the InterCity Classes 90 and 91. They are the trains of the 21st century, according to British Rail, and it is likely that train sets up and down the country will never look the same again.



New Electronic Start Gantry from Scalextric



The futuristic image of British Rail – Hornby's newly tooled Class 91

Hornby is, of course, also keeping its train tracks linked to the past, but the classic steam and electric models it produces will contain more electronically-, rather than pressure-, controlled details. The Stannier's 8F, for instance, will boast a glowing firebox.

RACING TECHNOLOGY

If Hornby hides the electronic technology of its train sets behind stylistic and historic exteriors, it is also keen to show off the futuristic capabilities of its new Scalextric motor racing range.

The main track attractions are the **Electronic Overhead Start Gantry** and the **Electronic Lap Counter** kit. The Gantry starts a race by showing the colour red, then a five-to-one countdown before allowing the cars past the starting grid. The lap counter notches up the number of circuits and includes two pit stop facilities at the trackside.

" . . . the Scalextric leap into the realms of fantasy generated most excitement . . . "

It is the new cars – and the Scalextric leap into the realms of fantasy – that generated the most excitement at the Toy Fair. Like Gremlin Graphics, Hornby has tied up the MASK cartoon licence, so you will be able to take control of Matt Trakker's famous Mask turbo car against Miles Mayhem's monstrous wheels. There are two MASK racing sets: **MASK ThunderHawk Patrol** and **MASK ThunderHawk Attack**. Both contain the usual lengths of track and the scale car, but the Attack pack introduces a flying leap feature which will have even the Mayhem ratpack shuddering in its grooves.

The more realistic racing cars include the **Jaguar XJR-9**, **Porsche 956**, **Lotus Renault** and **Lotus Honda**, all of which have some impressively advanced features. All new Porsches boast working brake lights, while the Lotus racers sport a turbo afterburn flash and smoke which pours from the back wheels during the rev up period, all controlled with gentle manipulation of the computerised hand-held control units.

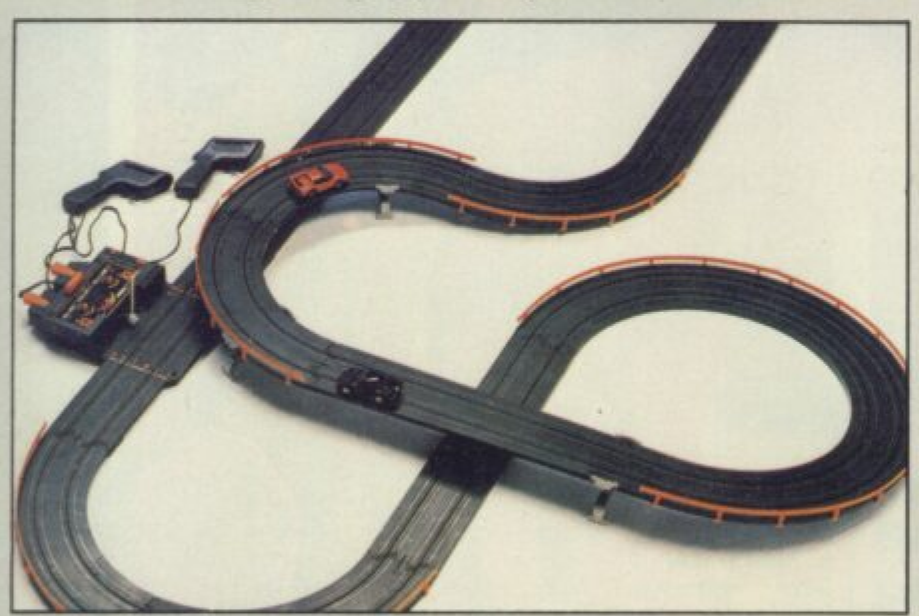
A new range of state-of-the-art accessories also makes night racing more realistic. The hazard **Long Chicane** crash barrier includes flashing lights to make driving safer and the **Public Address System** gives a blow by blow account of the race. Track safety has also been improved with the introduction of **Magnatraction** which holds cars on the track using a method similar to that used by the Japanese on their hovering motorail trains. Add to that the introduction of four wheel drive on many of the models, plus scale models of the **World Championship** and **Formula One Silverstone** track and you can see that Hornby has come a long way since the introduction of its clockwork train sets.

AURORA

If Scalextric looks impressive but complex then the **Aurora** racing kits, from Tomy, are impressive but compact; they fit onto the dining room floor rather than take over an attic.

The cars are controlled from a function box built into the track. This box contains three plugs, similar in construction to the Atari joystick ports you find on most home computers. The car controllers also resemble a joystick with a simple trigger for acceleration and deceleration. Other controls, to set the number of laps in a race and the lanes in which the cars should drive, are built into the control box together with a simple switch which releases the cars at the start of a race.

Compact stack-track layouts from Tomy's Aurora range, incorporate the latest technology through joystick-style control



You can also add the new **Aurora AFX** lap counter to the orange part of the track. It clocks up the laps for both cars independently using a dial system, rather than the more easily read LED digits from the Scalextric lap counter, but it is better situated, being at the side of the course rather than facing the on-coming cars.

The Aurora range contains four new racing sets. The first is the **Formula One Dual**, comprising two turbo chassied Formula One racers on the fast bend of a scale Grand Prix Circuit. There is eight feet of race track, two piers, six crash barriers and two plug-in in hand controllers and a two-way racing plug which allows cars to switch lanes.

Midnight Racers contains two AFX Turbo Firebirds with working headlights for night driving. The dual-level track layout comprises banked curves, four piers laid over the ground circuit and eight crash barriers.

The Ghost Racer set takes on the electronic power of Scalextric at its best with a built-in computer control centre for programming the number of laps and the speed of the cars. Ghost Racer cars, which include a Testarosa and Porsche 959 are ideal for lone racers who have no friends to take on. You can leave the computer to control one of the cars while you handle the other.

Finally, the **Daredevil Rally** set contains a Peugeot 205 GTI and Volkswagon Golf GTI – what(?), they may not be your average racing car but the fun comes when you see what they're up against. The tortuous track includes a steep climb-and-drop wall, loop-the-loop, a high speed S-curve, nine piers and 12 crash barriers. If you did it for real you'd be in trouble.

"The car controllers also resemble a joystick . . . "

UP THE SCALE

Radio controlled models are the current craze for youngsters and it is Japanese manufacturers Tomy and Bandai who are cashing in on the hottest sport since skate boarding.

Tomy has four models in its range of Honda racing bikes, each of which have pillow tyres, remote-control handlebar steering and working headlights. The lowest in the range is the **Honda Fourtrax 250R**. It has a forward/reverse drive switch, two forward speeds, and one reverse, all controlled from an easy grip throttle. One step up, and the Honda Fourtrax has a push button controller and a fast auto-stop function that boasts an optional free wheeling action.



Tomy's Honda racing bike range is all remote controlled



The **Honda ATC 250R** is an All-Terrain Cycle with a powerful accelerator which can get the wheels revolving at 2.5mph. A more powerful version of the ATC, code-named the **350X** has two forward speeds of 2.5mph and 4.5mph, together with a fast-stop footbrake action.

Bandai, meanwhile, has three additions to its radio control range. Two of the models are fast action scale racing cars, the **Lamborghini Countach** and the **Monte Carlo**. The third is a highly detailed, all-terrain: **Off Road Race Truck. All are controlled by joystick-based handsets.**

POCKET PINBALL

Just as old console games find their way from the arcades onto home computers, so miniature electronic pinball machines are finding their way into the games market.

Tomy had two of the latest pinballs on show at the Toy Fair. The first, and smallest, is **Atomic Pinball**. The game board has banks of Proton Bumpers, which set off an electronic bell when hit by the metal ball. An electronic score board notches up the Particle Points as the ball thunders through the gates and flips against the Factor Bumpers. Whether it stays in play or sinks into oblivion depends on your skill with the two flippers at the bottom of the board.

The big daddy of all pocket pinball machines, however, is the **Astro Shooter**. It boasts three flip controllers – one in the middle of the board and two at the bottom – and you will need them all to keep the ball in play! At the top are plastic gates, a hyper rollway and two mega-bumpers, but it is the lower end of the playing area you have got to watch. Firstly there are the Kickout Craters which take the ball into a hole and spit it out when you're least expecting it. Then right at the bottom of the board Tomy have put a Rollover Forcefield. If you manage to keep the ball in play over it for long enough, all the lights in the field's circle light up and you score a bonus.

Even the score facility on Astro Shooter is as realistic as the game's bigger arcade brothers. The top set of digits shows the high score while the bottom shows your current success. Current scores can be reset by a push button but the high score remains on the table ready for the next game even when you disconnect the pinball from its mains power.

CUDDLETRONIC

Finally, no visit to the Toy Fair would be complete without a report on something cute and cuddly. I guarantee these furry things will be all the rage at Christmas and who'll blame mums when they fall for – yes you've guessed it – electronic pets.

There are three of them, all as insipid as each other and all incredibly irritating. Take **Petster Spider** – please! He likes a quiet doze, especially when his batteries are run down, but if you make a move towards him his eyes light up and he crawls towards you, ready to play games.

If spiders aren't your bag, especially giant furry ones, then try the two cats in the range. **Petster** is the world's first electronic pussy. He is remote controlled and moves in any direction you tell him. He also purrs, flashes his eyes and plays on his own, which generally means moving about randomly and getting in everyone's way – just like the real thing.

Alternatively, if a small cat isn't enough of a handful, give a home to **Petster Deluxe**, another moggie. This one likes to be stroked, but his microchip brain ensures that one minute he's docile and the next he's leaping out of your lap. Great fun, if you're that way inclined.



" . . . furry things will be all the rage at Christmas . . . "

WHERE AND WHEN

All the toys I have mentioned in these two reports from the Earls Court Toy Fair are available now from Hamley's in London and will be available from toy stockists such as Zodiac and WH Smith within the next six months. The Hornby and Bandai products will soon be available from branches of the Beatties toy chain, and the Tomy pocket electronic games should be available from bigger branches of Dixons shortly.



REVIEWS

IT IS now seven months since THE GAMES MACHINE was launched. In that first issue only two 16-bit games were reviewed. But the numbers have been on the increase and this issue we review a record amount – no less than 26 games across Atari ST, Amiga and PC formats. Many software houses are entering the 16-bit market for the first time – **Gremlin Graphics** makes an appearance with ***Pink Panther*** and **Vampire's Empire**, programmed by Magic Bytes, **Activision** make an appearance with ***GeeBee Air Rally*** and **Predator**, **US Gold** have conversions of ***Rolling Thunder***. It's all very promising for owners of the machines.

So it comes as no surprise to see that this month's top game, **Mastertronic**'s Sidewinder, is on the ST. Mastertronic is pleased with the way the market's going – both *Xenon* and *Roadwars* went straight to the top of the Microdealer 16-bit charts.

Also new to the 16-bit scene are **Quicksilva** who bring us ***Flintstones*** (voted the most hip cartoon by *The Observer*'s **M** magazine recently). Also from Quicksilva is the return of Pac-Man – almost as ancient as Fred and family! – in ***Pac-Land***, a tremendous conversion from Namco's coin-op.

Quite a few original game popped up in time for our Easter deadline – **Electronic Arts** settled for a nautical flavor this month with ***Power At Sea*** and ***Strike Fleet*** – and came up trumps with ***Card Sharks***, which has turned us into compulsive gamblers. **Special FX** boweled us out with ***Gutz***, if you'll pardon the expression, a frantic blast set in a megaton alien's tummy. And **Epyx** delivered a game a lot of people have been waiting for: ***Impossible Mission II***. It was almost too late, so apologies, but we just managed to cram it into a corner of page 74.

And yes, we've done it again, we've found our monthly breakout game in the shape of ***Jinks*** from **Go!** on the Amiga.

THIS MONTH'S REVIEWING TEAM WAS: Mark Caswell, Richard Eddy, Robin Hogg, Julian Rignall, Paul Sumner, Nik Wild, Stuart Wynne

LEAD REVIEWS

SIDEWINDER

Mastertronic kept this one under their hats – but it's simply wonderful – combining perfectly tuned playability with stunning 16-bit graphics. Proving itself as a better game than last month's *Xenon*, it's an absolute snip at £9.95 and you can find out all about it on . . .

PAGE 50

USAS

We finally received our MSX II in time to take a look at *Usas* from **Konami**, and what a beauty it is. Looking far too much like an arcade game for its own good, Konami's quick thinking platform game reveals itself on . . .

PAGE 44

F1-SPIRIT

May is proving a good month for MSX owners as **Konami** again come up with the goods. *F1-Spirit* is a one- or two-player racing game with a host of additional features.

PAGE 71

IKARI WARRIORS

Elite are back in action with *Ikari Warriors*. Originally released for the Amstrad CPC 18 months ago, the other versions are finally here and the programmers have made a fine job converting the SNK coin-op. Watch out for the 16-bit versions soon!

PAGE 38

PAC-LAND

The ever-hungry yellow creature is back with a vengeance in **Quicksilva**'s arcade conversion of Namco's *Pac-Land*. Retaining all the features, simplistic graphics and identical music of the coin-op original, it's all been squeezed to fit inside a Commodore 64/128

PAGE 85

REVIEWS SUMMARY

COMMODORE 64/128

Blood Valley 43
Card Sharks 66
Chernobyl 56
Cybernoid 51
GeeBee Air Rally 68
Gutz 51
Ikari Warriors 38
Impossible Mission II 74
Pac-Land 70
Power At Sea 40
Samurai Warrior 72
Sherlock 89
Strike Fleet 52
Vampire's Empire 69

SPECTRUM 48/128

Blood Valley 43
Federation 90
Ikari Warriors 38
GeeBee Air Rally 68
Loads Of Midnight 90
Mega Apocalypse 58
Rastan 59
Teladon 45
Yeti 46

AMSTRAD CPC

Blood Valley 43
Gothik 55
Federation 90
Revenge Of Doh 45

ATARI ST

Dark Castle 39
Flintstones 58
Frost Byte 49
Pink Panther 66
Predator 60
Sidewinder 93
Return To Genesis 63
Rockford 56
Rolling Thunder 57
Skyfox 55
Slap Fight 45

AMIGA

Black Shadow 65
Blastaball 49
Bone Cruncher 46
Flintstones 58
GeeBee Air Rally 68
Jet 74
Jinks 74
Pink Panther 66
Return To Atlantis 73
Rolling Thunder 57
Strike Force Harrier 65
Vampire's Empire 69

PC

California Games 77
Pinball Construction Set 60
Rockford 56

MSX II

F1-Spirit 71
Usas 44

PRESS ANY KEY

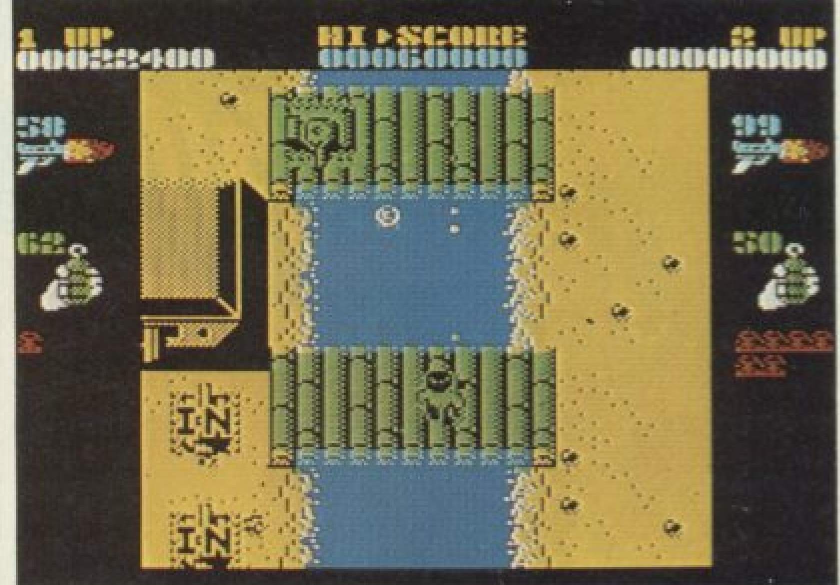
WHERE ARE MY CAR KEYS?

IKARI WARRIORS
Elite Systems

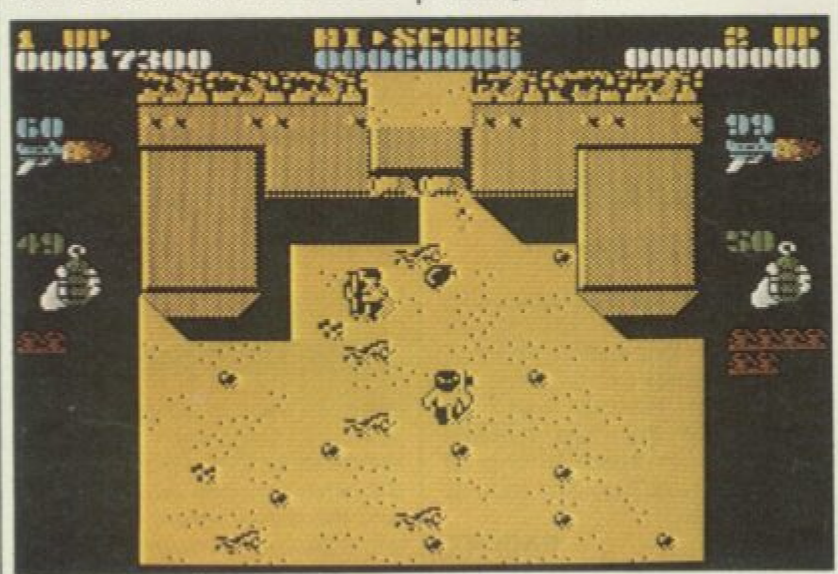
Two years ago, *Ikari Warriors* was released on the Amstrad CPC with the promise of other 8-bit versions to follow. It has taken Elite Systems over two years to fulfill that promise, but they have finally achieved it, with the added bonus of 16-bit versions to follow shortly, and all packaged in Elite's new-style large boxes.

Central America, the United States' backyard, is the setting for Elite's out and out shoot-'em-up *Ikari Warriors*. The scene is one of rebellion, bands of revolutionaries have captured US General Alexander Bonn and are now holding him prisoner in the US headquarters. Fortunately, just before he was taken prisoner, the General sent out a mayday which was picked up by two Ikari Warriors. These guys are pure fighting machines and just the men for the job when it comes to rescue missions involving use of maximum force.

Mishap sets in when the plane transporting the warriors is forced to crash land deep in the jungle, which is crawling with revolutionaries, enemy tanks and helicopters. These are the sort of men who have no qualms about shooting first and asking questions later. Clearly, only one thing remains: to get through, wasting the enemy en route.



It could be a bridge too far for the Spectrum warrior in this fine adapation to the Z80 screen



A lone warrior makes his way across hostile terrain – Commodore 64 screen

COMMODORE 64/128
Cassette: £9.95
Diskette: £14.95

A long time coming but Ikari Warriors **is finally here. Elite have had two years in which to get it right and the resulting program is an excellent, tough, constant action shoot–'em–up of the highest order. The game is slightly harder than the coin-op original, mainly because the warriors can shoot each other accidentally (which doesn't happen in the arcade game). Not surprisingly, the continue-play option has been taken out which means the entire game has to be completed in one go – a daunting task. The graphics do their job well, getting better as the warriors progress further. The playing area is faithfully copied from the original (albeit with a few minor adjustments) and overall there is very little difference in the game's appearance compared with the coin-op. Has it been worth the wait? It most certainly has!**

OVERALL 87%



The Ikari Warrior (or Warriors if the two-player option is selected) move(s) through the jungle taking out the guards with grenades and bullets. Retreating guards leave behind supplies of ammunition and extras for Ikari Warrirors to pick up. Extras include longer bullet range, an immediate-effect smart bomb and an extra boost to the destructive power of grenades. The latter is the most important of all as it enables warriors to launch grenades from a safe distance; but beware of

SPECTRUM 48/128
Cassette: £9.99
Diskette: £12.99

Ikari Warriors is a game which works best with two players, if only for the fun of working as a team. Despite smooth scrolling, high degree of graphic detail and variation, there's not an awful lot of room on screen in which to run around. Elite opted to place the status displays on either side of a resultingly smaller combat zone, in turn scaling down the graphics as small as possible without losing any of the detail. To avoid potentially disastrous attribute clash, warriors and enemy soldiers are the same colour as the background, a simple solution which works well and makes the game pleasing to look at and play. With the comprehensive front end (including a novel Kempston Mouse control method), Ikari Warriors is enjoyable mindless blasting, worthy of any fan of the original.

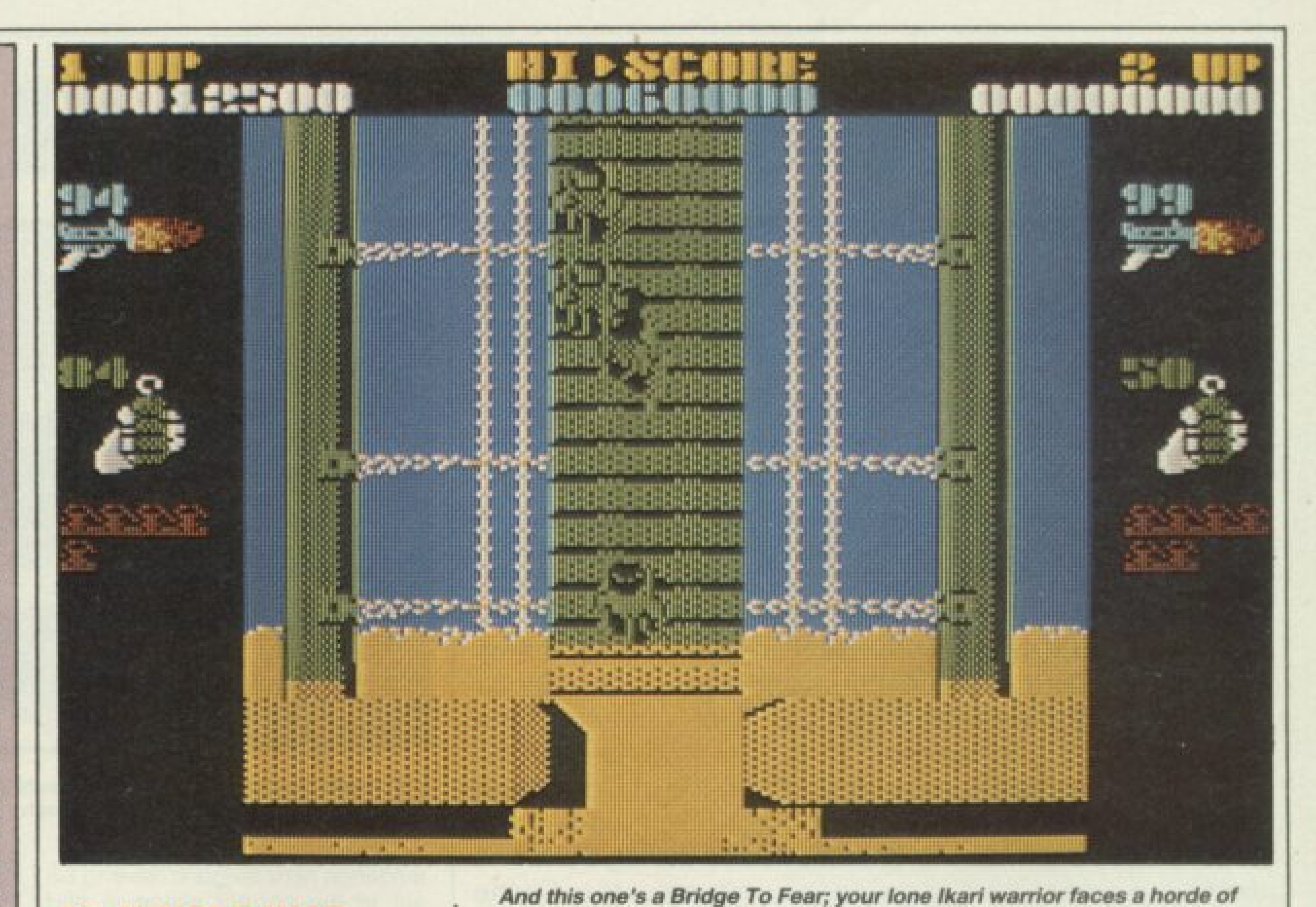
OVERALL 84%

OTHER FORMATS

PC, Atari ST and Commodore 16/+4 owners can expect to see Ikari Warriors on their machines priced at £19.99, £14.99 and £7.99 respectively. The original Amstrad version of two years ago is to be repackaged and re-released at the standard price of £9.99 on cassette and £14.99 on diskette.

stray grenades and bullets, for they are just as likely to hit your partner, losing him a life.

Converted from the SNK coin-op, *Ikari Warriors* faithfully recreates the arcade machine in graphics, playability and general layout. There are some omissions such as the large enemy tank at the end of each region, but on the whole, the tactics used in the arcade original can be applied to the home computer versions with remarkable ease.



And this one's a Bridge To Fear; your lone Ikari warrior faces a horde of unpleasantness ahead – Spectrum screen

IS JUNGLE WAR FAIR?

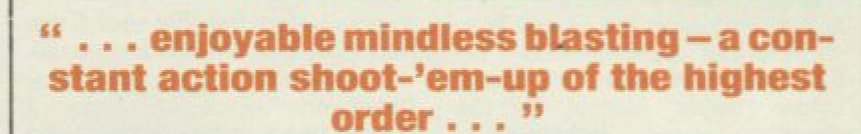
Jumping into one of the many deserted tanks dotted around the play area provides you with much needed protection from bullets and allows you to cut a path through the enemy ranks. The tank's fuel level must be kept topped up or it explodes on reaching zero. Warning is given, but with only a few seconds in which to get clear, and a horde of guards taking pot shots nearby, it is risky. Careful driving is essential to avoid trundling over mines, while quick reactions and some slick steering are needed to dodge thrown grenades.

As the game progresses, helicopter gunships fly down the screen firing bullets all over the place, shell-firing tanks patrol the jungle paths and machine gun bunkers bar the way, unless destroyed with a well placed grenade.

The game continues through the jungle, across lakes, along wooden bridges and eventually into the enemy occupied US base to rescue the General and return home with the satisfaction of a job well done.

At the very start of the game, a warrior exits the crashed aeroplane – Commodore 64 screen





" . . . enjoyable mindless blasting – a constant action shoot-'em-up of the highest order . . . "

VERSION UPDATE

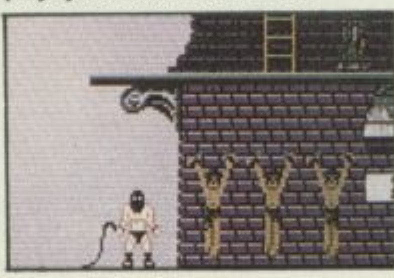
Knight takes castle

DARK CASTLE
Mirrorsoft

Atari ST: £24.99

MIRRORSOFT's gothic tale of heroic deeds arrives for the Atari ST. Built around a surprising number of platforms, ladders and swinging ropes, *Dark Castle* is home to the Black Knight, and as the brave adventurer, you must defeat him. The castle is made up of 14 deadly levels riddled with bats, rats and spooks that provide tough opposition. There is an ample supply of rocks dotted around with which to defend yourself, and as progression is made through the levels, additional weaponry – magic potions and fireballs – may be collected. *Dark Castle* was fully reviewed for the PC in TGM003 with an Amiga version update in TGM004.

In PC emulator mode, Dark Castle plays just the same on the ST



COMMENT

This version of Dark Castle is little different to its Amiga counterpart. The gameplay remains awkward and frustrating due to the complexity of the character control: joystick and mouse or keyboard. Combining the badly designed control method with the continual swapping of three disks results in a slow and frustrating game. The graphics and sound are of a relatively high standard but they are not sufficient to counter the poor gameplay.

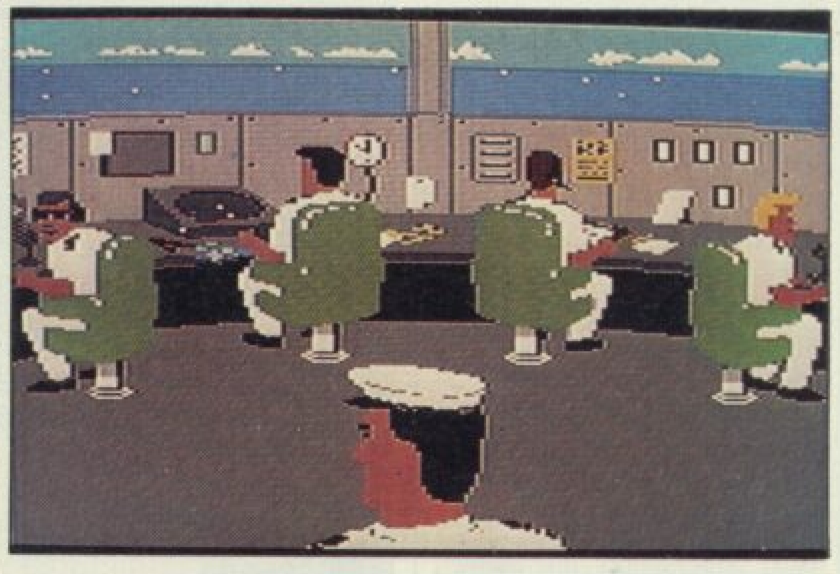
ATARI ST
OVERALL 47%



KAMIKAZE KRAZY

POWER AT SEA
Accolade

The Philippine islands became a key strategic base for the further conquest of Asia and Australasia by the Japanese in World War II. The war-torn archipelago became the site of land and sea battles whose names ring through history, Corregidor, Bataan and, in 1944, Leyte Gulf. One of World War II's greatest naval conflicts, it signalled the end Japan's domination of the Pacific. The US forces of Generals MacArthur and Nimitz, came together to culminate in the first landings on October 24 and 25. Simultaneously, the US fleet shattered the Japanese fleet, sinking most of it. The landings put the seal on MacArthur's famous promise made at Corregidor in March 1942: 'I shall return . . . ' Leyte Gulf marked the beginning of Japanese desperation, and during the clash the first of a new, terrifying weapon was used: the 'Divine Wind', better known as Kamikaze.



In Combat Control on board, which acts as a menu selection screen for the varied options – Commodore 64 screen

In the simulation the object is to capture four Japanese bases on the Philippines within 96 hours. Under player control is the American fleet, including a battleship, aircraft carrier and a cargo ship for use in the attack on the Imperial Japanese forces.

Stage One involves equipping the fleet prior to combat. In port fighters, bombers, fuel and troops are loaded. Space on each vessel is limited, necessitating shrewd allocation of resources if the fleet is to accomplish its task. Once equipped, the fleet sails into the Pacific.

From the bridge of the fleet battleship, the commander can access the main departments of his vessel. Messages are received by the communications officer, navigation provides a map showing vessel and target positions, a status screen shows the damage taken by each of the fleet's main ships and weapons control screen is where all the offensive/defensive armament is activated.

The Gulf is patrolled by enemy destroyers; the navigation officer alerts the commander if they come into radar contact. Once contact is established a decision has to be made whether to launch an air attack or wait for the enemy vessel to come in range of the battleship's guns. An air attack involves fighter planes diving in to take out the ship's anti-aircraft guns and make it safe for bombers to finish the attack.

The air attack is a simple simulation screen where the player flies the plane towards the ship to take out selected targets while trying to avoid being shot down or crashing into the sea. Failure to eliminate anti-aircraft guns results in the bombers being shot out of the sky before they get near. If this happens, the commander can use the battleship's guns on enemy destroyers. Once in range, a course heading broadside to the enemy is taken and guns elevated to fire deflection shots. A succession of hits will sink it, but all the time it is firing back, inflicting damage on the American fleet.

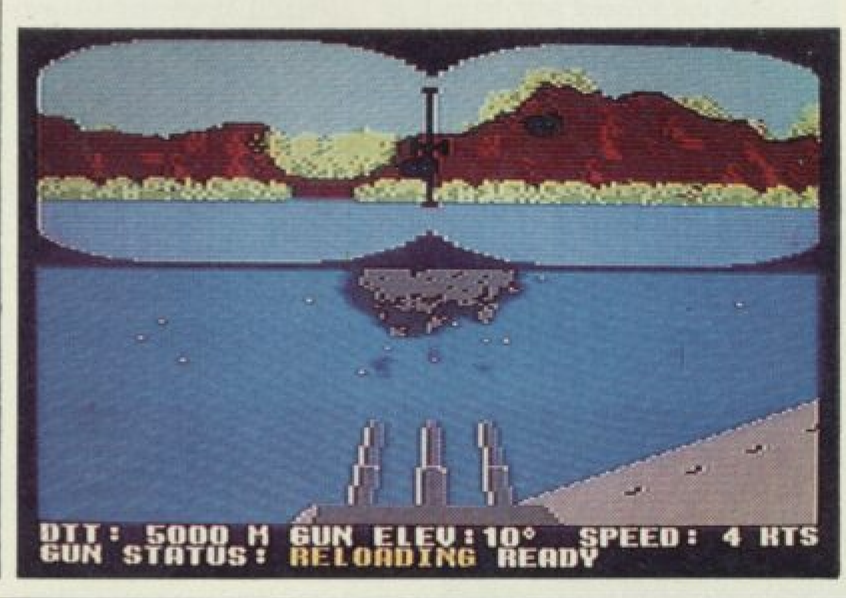
NO FRIENDLY SHORE

When land-based Japanese aircraft attack, the fleet's anti-aircraft guns come into play. Kamikaze planes are the worst as they fly directly at the ship and, unless shot down, collide causing severe damage (and possibly the end of the game). Elements of *Beach Head* are very much in evidence here as guns have to be set at the correct elevation and angle of deflection to hit the target.

Once the fleet comes in range of a base, the two-stage assault begins. First, coastal defences are bombarded by the battleship's massive 16-inch guns. Any targeting mistakes can be corrected by using a binocular view to judge the angle of error and correct it for the next shot. Japanese bunkers lie towards the island's end, so the entire coast defences must be passed before they come into view. The amount of damage inflicted determines the difficulty troops will face in assaulting and capturing the base. To assault the base, select the number of troops to send in and the amphibious landing begins. Allocate too few and they will need reinforcing, send too many and there might not be enough men left to capture other bases.

The game is over when all four enemy bases are taken, the 96-hour time limit runs out or the fleet suffers severe damage and cannot complete the mission.

Attacking land-based defences prior to landing the marines – Commodore 64



COMMODORE 64/128

Cassette: £9.95
Diskette: £14.95

In many ways, Power At Sea **is similar to Accolade's previous release,** The Train, **with simple, independent arcade sequences brought together to form a game. There's always a problem when it comes to introducing mini-arcade sections into programs: the amount of memory available restricts the mini-game's complexity, resulting in limited depth of play – the problem with** Power At Sea. **Once mastered, the mini-games lose any of their challenge; the only demanding stage remains the fighter/bomber sequence which relies more on luck (to avoid being shot down) than anything. The subject matter of the Leyte Gulf battle is rich in potential and, to its credit,** Power At Sea **manages to bring together the main elements of the historic conflict. Unfortunately, like** The Train, **the game is far too easy and it would only take a couple of hours play before its appeal is exhausted.**

OVERALL 65%

" . . . rich in potential, unfortunately the game is far too easy."

COMING SOON...

ROAD BLASTERS

...the Hottest, Meanest Machine you've ever seen...



A BLOODY HELL

BLOOD VALLEY
Gremlin Graphics

Blood Valley is based on the Duelmaster Fighting Fantasy adventure book of the same name, written by **Mark Smith** and **Jamie Thomson**. These authors have previously contributed two titles to the Fighting Fantasy series, *Talisman* and *Sword Of Samurai*. They also participated in the software design of games based on these series, and Jamie co-wrote, for **Games Workshop**, what is now a classic adventure, *The Tower Of Despair*.

The action takes place in the evil and sinister Valley of Gad, wherein the reptillian ruler Archveult holds his annual hunt. A slave is set free at an ancient circle of standing stones, subsequently hunted down and cruelly put to death by the Archveult and his allies.

Blood Valley is for one or two players. In solo mode you are the quarry and may select one of three characters to play: priest, barbarian, or thief. Each has different characteristics which have to be utilised in order to complete the quests and objectives set that enable an escape. In two-player mode, one person plays the Archveult who, with allies Kritos Bloodheart, Kariim the Assassin and the Demiveult, attempts to track down the second player. Using a full-screen map, each ally is positioned in the valley, ideally where you think the quarry may run. When the hunted enters a place inhabited by an ally, Archveult teleports there to do battle.

Sadly, it is here, at its heart, that the game falters; the two-player option becomes a waste of time, as all one player has to do is wait for the other to die – there is no comraderie in *Blood Valley*!

HOW RED WAS MY VALLEY

Once all the choices are made, the hunt is on. You begin with very little knowledge of the Valley of Gad, save that the capital city is called Askelon, and that there is a way out at the western end.

Horizontally scrolling through different scenes – the screen is split to show the two players' characters – both parties are open to attack from the local inhabitants: vampires, trolls and demons all attempt to put an end to the hunt. However, the players are not defenceless: pressing fire or an appropriate key, the characters' weapons are activated, which they use to good effect.

During head-to-head battles, the energy meter – a sword icon – shows rapid depletion, although replenishment is achieved by eating food. Useful items such as gold and magic potions can be collected and added to the player's inventory. A choice is offered to view the inventory, use an item from it or return to the game.

Considering the depth and content of the Duelmaster game books and their game potential, the computer versions are all shallow in comparison. Little is taken from the books; the game relies more on a hack and slay approach than interaction, and even the two-player game fails to relieve the tedium of continuous running and fighting. Followers of the *Blood Valley* game books will be very disappointed with this – the thrill of the hunt is definitely lacking.



A single-player game with the computer playing the hunter – Commodore 64 screen



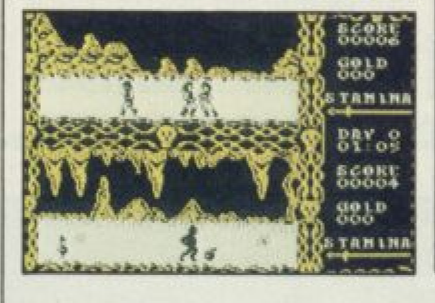
In the dark and sinister valley, something stirs: quarry on the top layer, hunter below in a two-player game – Amstrad screen

SPECTRUM
Cassette: £7.99

The graphics are poor: small, badly drawn characters move woodenly around simplistic backdrops. The prospect of watching stick-men hobbling around soon kills any desire to play the game, a fact compounded by the lack of decent sound. After hours of playing and several attempts to discover anything deeper, our opinion remains unchanged.

OVERALL 30%

Monochromatic graphics work less well on the Spectrum – here showing a two-player game



COMMODORE 64/128
Cassette: £9.99
Diskette: £14.99

Blood Valley **is deceptive. The graphics are better than average, the highly effective music is haunting and the scenario has strong potential. But running along from left to right, taking swipes at constantly attacking enemies makes for a very limited game, even with the various regions and different creatures to encounter. Graphically it's a mixed bag: some areas are attractively presented while others are more abstract in appearance, making it difficult to determine where your character is in the valley. Animation is basic and on the whole limited.**

OVERALL 41%

AMSTRAD
Cassette: £9.99
Diskette: £14.99

Visually more lively than the other 8-bit versions, the weak gameplay drags it down and boredom sets in quickly. Blood Valley**'s graphics are acceptable, though sprites are porky and move slowly across colourful, but confusing, backdrops. The sprinkling of RPG elements – really just the inventory – is spoiled through some objects being difficult to identify – trial and error is needed to discover which does what.**

OVERALL 46%

" . . . even the two-player game fails to relieve the tedium of running and fighting."

A ROM WITH A VIEW

USAS
Konami

The Japanese are renowned for taking their leisure pursuits seriously. Earlier this year a game for the Nintendo, *Dragon's Quest III*, was released in the land of the rising sun and hyped to such an extent that it is rumoured over two million copies were sold on its first day in the shops – the user base for the Nintendo in Japan is ten million. *Dragon's Quest I* and *II* were converted to the MSX, unforunately there are no plans to do the same with the third in the trilogy. But with Nintendo's plans for Europe still firmly shaded in corporate mystery, it is the MSX II machines which offer the best opportunity of seeing fresh Japanese games on our screens.

Centuries ago, the War God Induras banished Usas, the Supreme Mother God, and threw the four pieces of her sacred jewel to the winds.

'A party of Wit and Cles' (to quote the usually quirky English translation) – the two heroes – are attempting to find the broken jewel and achieve one of the greatest discoveries of the academic world. Their adventures lead them to many strange places – which all look remarkably similar – to fight many unusual enemies. The instructions are, for a Japanese game, commendably brief: three pages.

As is typical with Japanese software, the game's front-end is entertaining, polished and informative. It displays page after page of storyline which introduces the characters and gives a thorough background to the story. During all of which, a non-atmospheric tune plays.

The two archaeologists travel by car to the place of Temples, once there they alight to continue their journey on foot. On arriving outside one of the five temples, you are asked if you would like to enter, if affirmative, you can choose which of the characters is to face the challenges within, and attempt to return with one of the four keys required to allow access to the fifth temple.

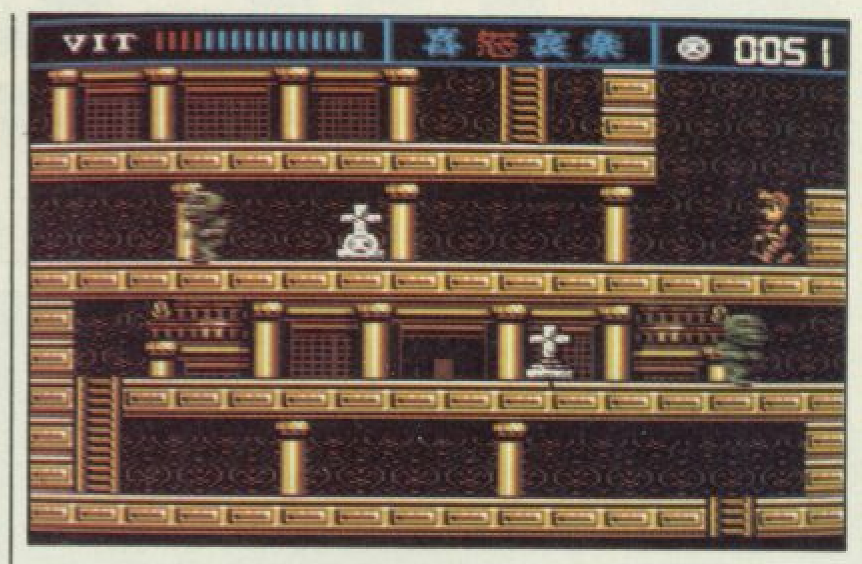
TEMPLE FUGIT

The two heroes have differing characteristics, Wit carries weapons and Cles is a kung fu expert; the powers of both may be increased, or changed, by picking up different keys – represented as a Japanese symbol or word – along the way. One of these symbols is the key to the end chamber of each level where battle with a demon awaits. If the creature is destroyed, one of the four keys to the main temple is yours and a magic beam transports you back outside.

The other characteristics, jumping ability and speed, can be enhanced by collecting coins of different values; having sufficient money means you can trade with it for enhancements.

The start option screen: select a door to terror and choose whether to play Wit or Cles

Usas is basically a platforms and ladders game although, in the refreshingly original Japanese style, it is full of intricacies which lift it high above others of the genre. All the characters are drawn cartoon-style and move with precise realism. The puzzles and dangers faced within the temples are fascinating, infuriating, dumbfounding and impressive. The backdrops are nicely drawn and full of detail. An occasional glitch flickers onto the screen but is insufficient to threaten the enjoyment of play. The accompanying sound is effective although the continuous musical track can become irritating.



Inside the temple, Wit is doing his best to outwit the enemy

MSX II

Cartridge: £19.95

The Japanese don't take their games software too seriously. Like their films – of the Godzilla ilk – they throw everything in while maintaining a basic scenario. The imagination of the programmers knows no bounds, progress in their games is a must if only to find out what bizarre event takes place on the next screen. *Usas* is a lovely example of this style, incorporating weird and wonderful monsters with crazy obstacles and obscure weapons, all programmed with polish and finesse. Attention to detail is omnipresent and a fantastic, impelling urge to get to the final battle is instilled by the steady progress one makes with practice – and the enjoyment to be gleaned by making it. It is good to have MSX back in THE GAMES MACHINE office.

OVERALL 88%

" . . . refreshingly original, infuriating, dumbfounding and impressive . . . "

Cles is in trouble because a ghoulie is about to drop on him from a great height. But he's the fastest of the two and should be able to get out of the way



MOON BLUES

TELADON
Destiny

The name of **Nick Eatock**, *Teladon*'s author, is firmly linked with that of Destiny boss Francis Lee. Nick wrote *Sorderon's Shadow*, published by Beyond, and *Greyfell*, published by Starlite – both companies for which Francis Lee worked before forming Destiny.

Teladon, an evil psychopathic genius on the moon, is threatening to destroy the world and it is up to you to stop him. But be that as it may, the game has two distinct types of play: a 3-D section, reminiscent in appearance of *Micronaut One* (but only as a means of reference, since the 3-D effect is extremely limited) and an isometric maze section.

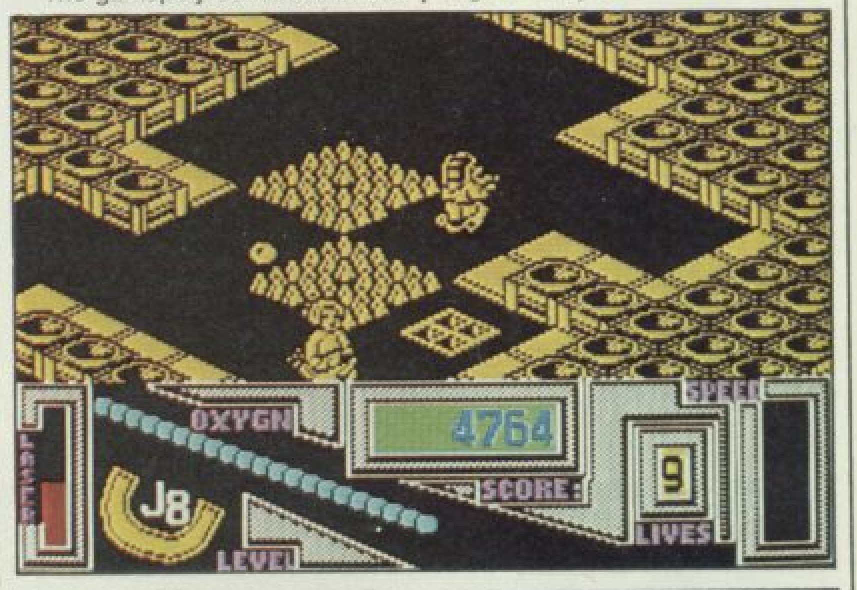
First you are astride a jet-scooter, speeding through an enemy-infested moon tunnel. Your mission is to survive long enough to reach an underground complex and find Teladon's HQ before his destructive plan is put into operation. Two types of enemy inhabit the tunnel: bulbous craft that fire heat-seeking missiles, and spinners which destroy you on contact. Both may be either avoided or shot with lasers. Other obstacles include locked gates, and laser beam fences. Objects to aid you may also be found along the way: keys to open gates, trapdoors to gain entrance to underground caverns, and, as the moon has no atmosphere, oxygen bubbles to replenish your supply.

Fast 3-D action and isometric adventure on the Spectrum

DO YOUR BEST LEVEL

Part two takes place in the isometric maze complex below the moon's surface. Each level – there are ten – is circular in shape. As you explore the maze, enemy guards on scooters attempt to kill you by firing lethal bubbles.

Extra lives, laser energy, and oxygen pills are available to be picked up and utilised. Trapdoors and air chutes transport you up or down a level – although this is unwelcome if the current level has not been thoroughly explored.
vein, alternating between ever-
The gameplay continues in this
shortening tunnels and decreasing complexes – until Teladon's HQ is reached. Once there, you must fight your way to the self-destruct button to end Teladon's threat. There is some interest at the start, but because of the indifferent gameplay, these two time-worn game formats never rise above being clichés, and boredom soon deflates the urge to carry on.



SPECTRUM 48K
Cassette: £8.95

Graphically the game is bland with a plump sprite wobbling across sparse backdrops, and indistinct enemy craft trying their best to terrorise. The line-drawn and shaded 3-D tunnels with little apparent depth are unconvincing – so are the aliens popping suddenly into full-blown existence. Of course Teladon **runs in 128 mode, but there's no advantage, not even the poor sound FX are enhanced and the tune's the same.**

OVERALL 46%

OTHER FORMATS

There are no plans at present to release this game in any other format.

" . . . indifferent gameplay and boredom soon deflate the urge to carry on."

VERSION UPDATE

Bouncing back

ARKANOID, REVENGE OF DOH
Imagine

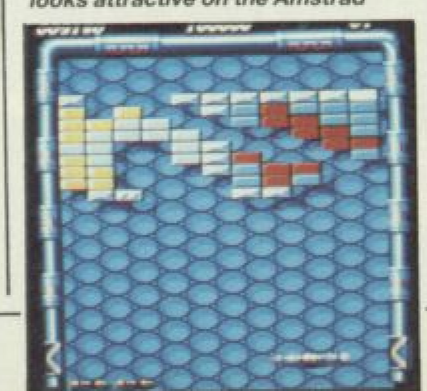
Amstrad Cassette: £8.95

REVIEWED last issue (TGM005) for the Spectrum, **Revenge Of Doh** appears this month for the Amstrad. Including enhanced sound effects and music courtesy of **Gary Biasillo** and colourful graphics created by **Ivan Horn**, Doh kneads revenge.

Forget the scenario of a huge alien spacecraft and the time-warped, mind-warped vengeance of super-being Doh, what we have here is a superior, upgraded version of Imagine's earlier *Breakout* clone, *Arkanoid*.

The battle takes place over numerous screens, filled by brick walls, and aliens. You use your 'ship'/bat to deflect an 'energy bolt'/ball, destroy the bricks and collect any dropping bonuses you can for extra powers.

Great on all formats, Doh certainly looks attractive on the Amstrad



COMMENT

Control of the bat via joystick is a little sluggish – this type of game is best played using a mouse. However, the graphics are aesthetically pleasing (despite a minor screen glitch around the uppermost border) and all components in the game are clear and easily seen. Apart from the denser graphics, this plays identically to the Spectrum version. The audio content, however, is omnipresent with suitable effects and bouncy jingles throughout.

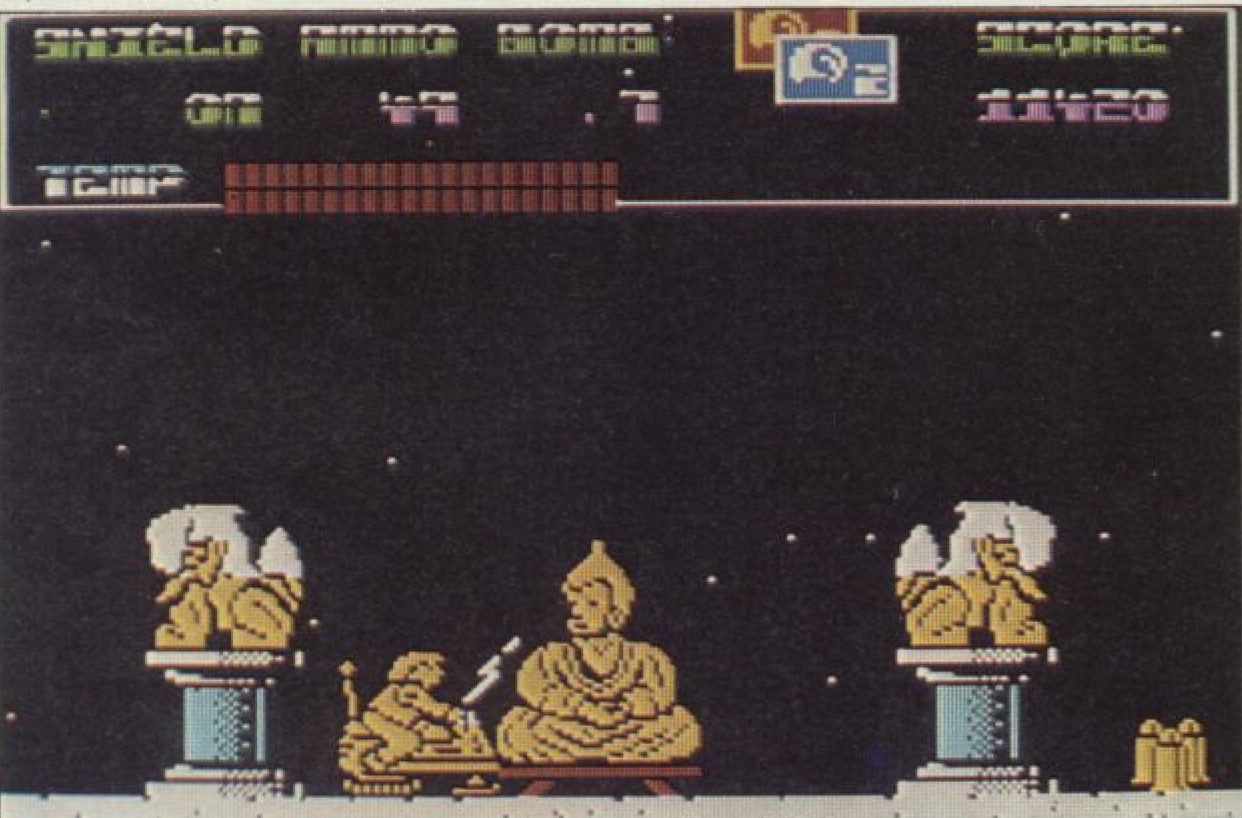
AMSTRAD CPC
OVERALL 78%

PRESS ANY KEY

FREEZE A JOLLY GOOD FELLOW

YETI
Destiny

Since Europeans began to explore Tibet, they have reported legends of a huge ape-like creature called the Metoh-Kangmi – roughly translated, the filthy abominable snowman. The stories cover a huge area, from the Caucasus to the Himalayas, from the Pamirs, through Mongolia, to the far eastern tip of Russia. In central Asia these creatures are called Mehteh, or Yetis, while tribes in the eastern regions refer to them as Almas. The Yeti has been part of the folklore of the Sherpas of Nepal, the Tibetans, the Bhutanese and Sikkimese for centuries, and their children are brought up on legends of the Yeti in much the same way as English children are warned of the Bogeyman. *Yeti* – available first on the Spectrum, is by veteran **Christian Urquhart**.



SPECTRUM
Cassette: £8.95

Graphically Yeti **is good, incorporating large, colourful and well drawn obstacles. The animated creatures chase the explorer across the snowy foothills of the Himalayas as if they mean real business.** Yeti **doesn't involve particularly original gameplay, yet the elements combine well. The Yeti is involved in only a small section toward the end, which gives rise to the notion that the game could actually have been called anything! Despite this,** Yeti **is well implemented and good fun to play, certainly not abominable.**

OVERALL 69%

OTHER FORMATS

A Commodore 64 version is set for release although at the time of going to press Destiny could not confirm a release date. There are no plans for Amstrad or 16-bit conversions as yet.

Many men have attempted to capture the abominable snowman, all have failed. *Yeti* – capitalising on Chris Bonnington's much-publicised seek-and-communicate expedition – revolves around a modern expedition whose objective is to capture the elusive creature at all costs.

Armed with ten grenades, a rifle containing 50 rounds of ammunition and three lives, you, as the brave explorer, trek across the wild, snowy wastes in search of your quarry. The game begins at base camp, first objective being to survive long enough to reach the end of level 1. Obstacles both animate and inanimate block your path: huge buddhas throw bolts of lighting, mad meandering monks vie with each other to try and kill you, and mystical wonders ceaselessly hinder your journey – until you shoot them. Many obstacles are only passable by destroying them with a grenade, although a careful eye must be kept on the ammunition level. Fortunately supplies are scattered around the playing area, and moving over them restocks your inventory.

STAY FROSTY

There is another hazard to be faced: much of the game is set in mountainous Tibet where frostbite is a real threat. Constant monitoring of your body temperature meter is required, if it drops too low you are turned into a human icicle, although collecting a mystical fluid prevents this from happening.

Crunching through the snow, blasting everything in sight with bullets and grenades proves to be very enjoyable in this blend of shoot-'em-up and pick-'em-up played across a series of horizontal flick screens, which often reminds of *Exolon*. The eponymous Yeti is occasionally glimpsed during the first three levels, but is impossible to catch until the fourth. Only then is the player is given the chance to ensnare it, and prove the legend of the Yeti to be true.

" . . . blasting everything in sight proves to be very enjoyable . . . "

VERSION UPDATE

Soap operandum

BONE CRUNCHER
Superior Software

Amiga
Diskette: £14.95

FIRST released for the Commodore 64 and BBC earlier this year, and gaining 70% in TGM004, Amiga owners may now rest easy with the knowledge that *Bone Cruncher* is available for their machine, should they desire it. Under the player's control Bono, the entrepreneurial dragon, travels around a many-levelled maze making soap for filthy monsters whilst trying to avoid his enemies, the Glooks and the Spiders. The layout of the first few mazes in this *Boulderdash* familiar, are relatively simple to deal with . . . but the deeper Bono goes the harder it becomes.

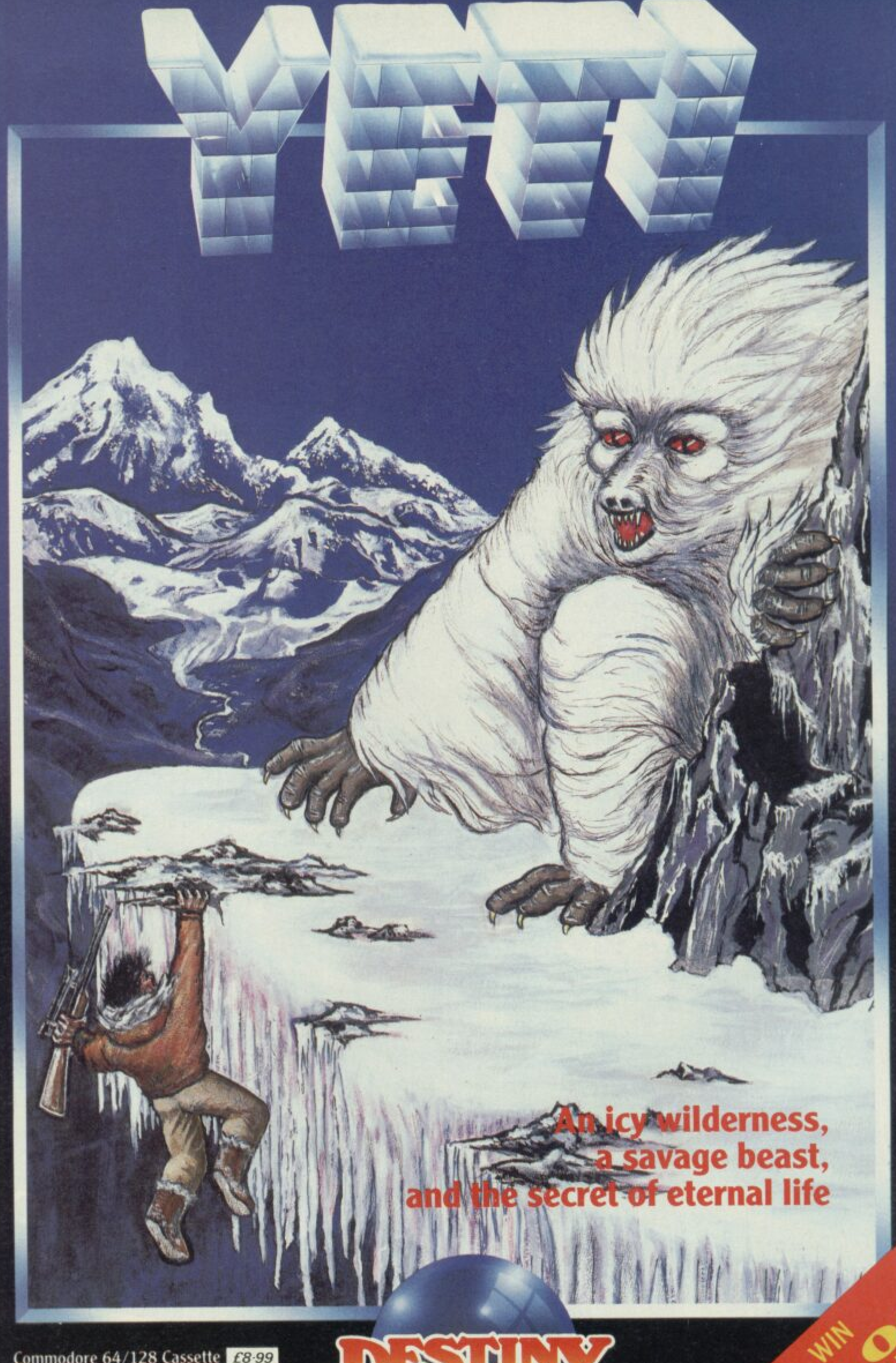
COMMENT

Little different to that of the Commodore 64, the Amiga characters are slightly better defined. The monster growls, speech and the theme tune which spiced up the Commodore version are gone, and the tune which does play is mediocre. Bono's bowel trouble is the only sound effect unique to the Amiga version, which hardly strains the might of a 512K memory. Bone Cruncher **on the Amiga plays just as well as the 8-bit game and represents a cleverly designed and enjoyable puzzle, but it lacks any attempt at improvement over the smaller machine versions.**

AMIGA
OVERALL 61%







DESTINY

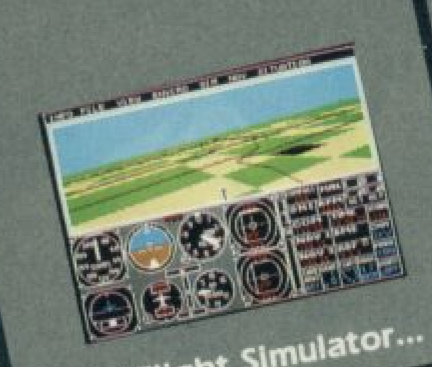
Commodore 64/128 Cassette £8·99
& Disk (£12·99)
ZX Spectrum 48K/128K/+ £8·99.

Mail Order: Activision (UK) Ltd,
Units 3 & 4 Lloyds Close, Finedon Road
Industrial Estate, Wellingborough,
Northampton NN8 4SR ☎ (0933) 76768

WIN
£30,000
CHECK PACK FOR DETAILS

subLOGIC

THE FLIGHT CHOICE!


From the sophisticated realism of **Flight Simulator...**





...to the thrills and excitement of **Jet...**





...to new **Scenery Disk** adventures... SubLOGIC. Make The Flight Choice.



NOW with dedicated British distribution at a lower retail price! See Your Dealer.

Mailing Address:
subLOGIC
35 Piccadilly
Suite 101-110
London W1V 9PB
Telephone: 01-439 8985

PUCK OFF!

BLASTABALL
Mastertronic

Blastaball has quite a history; it was originally written for the 8-bit formats under the title *Hyperbowl* and released at a budget price. Following a conversion to the Atari ST, it became part of Arcadia's Super Select System, and from that coin-op, has now been downloaded onto Amiga. The Amiga version of *Blastaball* was converted by **Pete Waterfield** and **D Anderson** who together form part of **Icon Design**.

Set in the future, *Blastaball* is a one-on-one competitive sport derived from ice hockey. Players compete on the Blastaball board, viewed from above, attempting to score points by bashing a massive puck into their opponent's goal area. Each game has a time limit of three minutes or is halted by the referee if either player scores nine points. Both players are equipped with similar craft, chosen from ten available designs. A class-one ship is easier to handle than a class-ten, therefore the lower the number you select the easier the game is.

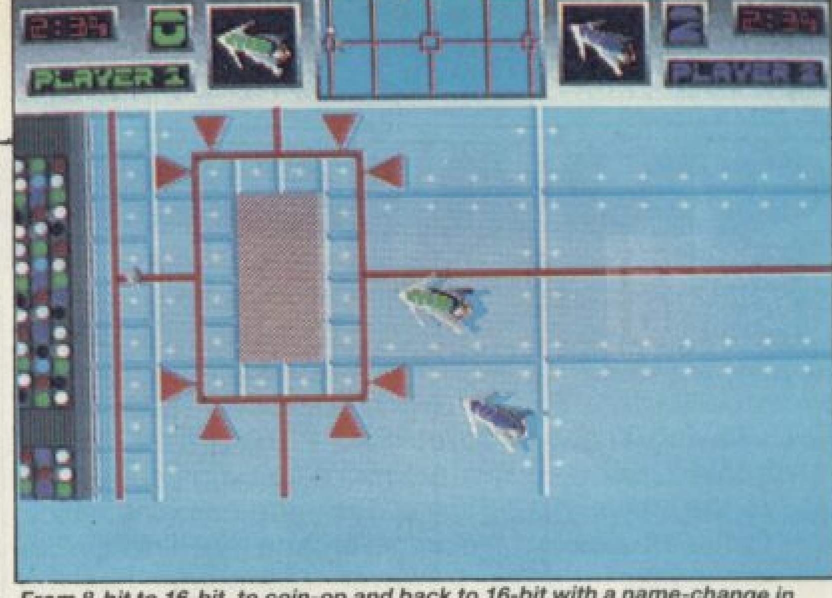
The Blastaball board is spread over several screens, and play begins with the puck in the centre with the opponents either side of it. Moving the puck is achieved by either colliding with it or firing at it with the cannon fixed to the nose of the craft. There are two ways of scoring: a line goal scores one point and is awarded when the puck crosses the end of the playfield and hits the barrier on the opposing side, or a full goal – for two points – which is achieved by driving the puck into the opponent's goal mouth.

A SPIN OFF

Under the player's control, via joystick, the craft spins clockwise or anticlockwise and is propelled with a thruster. Deceleration is also possible by pulling the joystick down. Craft five to ten have a homing facility for cannon fire, which means that unless a shot is absorbed by either the puck or the barriers, it circles back on itself and hits the puck. Unfortunately in these cases, the shot hits the puck from behind and sends it in the opposite direction to the one required.

Blastaball can be played by either one or two players. In one-player mode the board scrolls around the craft, while with two players it leaves the puck central, scrolling the board around it. When two players are engaged in simultaneous combat the craft often disappear from the screen as the action hots up: to get back on course follow the radar display shown at the top of the screen.

Though *Blastaball* is from Arcadia's Super Select System, do not expect it to be on par with *Xenon* – also part of the Arcadia range – it is a neat offering, and enjoyable as a two-player game, but could lose its appeal after some time.



From 8-bit to 16-bit, to coin-op and back to 16-bit with a name-change in between – Amiga screen

AMIGA
Diskette: £9.99

A good, if challenging, conversion of the Arcadia game. The graphics are of a high standard – everything is suitably metallic and hi-tech but the front-end presentation is weak with no theme tune or loading screen. Craft control takes a little getting used to due to the high level of inertia – it's much more apparent on this version than on the others – but practice makes perfect. Blastaball **should keep most Amiga owners happy for a while, though interest could soon be lost due to its simplistic concept; the game doesn't change much, it just gets harder.**

OVERALL 65%

" . . . challenging conversion of the Arcadia game, though simplistic . . . "

VERSION UPDATE

Snowman's land

FROST BYTE
Micro Value

Atari ST: £14.95

FOR many years the planet Cosmia had been a battleground. The foul creatures who inhabit its dark craters eventually win, and capture the vanquished Kreezers, imprisoning them in caverns far below the surface. But Hickey, a brave young Kreezer, escapes, and vows to search the caverns for his five friends and rescue them before beating a hasty retreat.

Hickey is of cylindrical shape and moves by flipping end over end. During his jerky travels he comes across three differing diamond-shaped sweets whose properties he can utilise by moving over them: with red sweets he moves faster, blue increase jumping power and green allow longer falls without sustaining damage. Ammunition is also available, vital if any headway is to be made as much of the game involves blasting the cavern denizens. Be warned however, some creatures are indestructible, and have to be dealt with carefully if progress is to be made.

Below the primary screen is the display panel, split into three windows, left showing current object held, right how many of five lives remain, centre the primary status display. Also shown is the 'Twang' meter, indicating the amount of time left to rescue your friends before they are eaten. If the captured Kreezers do become monster mash, the game ends.

Frost Byte was released ages ago on Spectrum, Amstrad and Commodore 64.



How does an eskimo build a house? – 'e glues it. An old gag for an old game in a new guise

COMMENT

Frost Byte**'s ST graphics are bright and colourful, with delightfully evil looking monsters. The game's many levels, filled with platforms and Kreezer-munching monsters provide plenty of pixel-perfect hazardous action. Although frustration can reign at first, with practice Hickey can be made to perform death-defying leaps and bounds across the screen, at which point the game becomes enjoyable. This implementation, as one might expect from a straight 8-bit upgrade at a budget price, does not use the Atari's full potential, but the overall impression is one of competence.**

ATARI ST
OVERALL 65%



SNAKES ALIVE

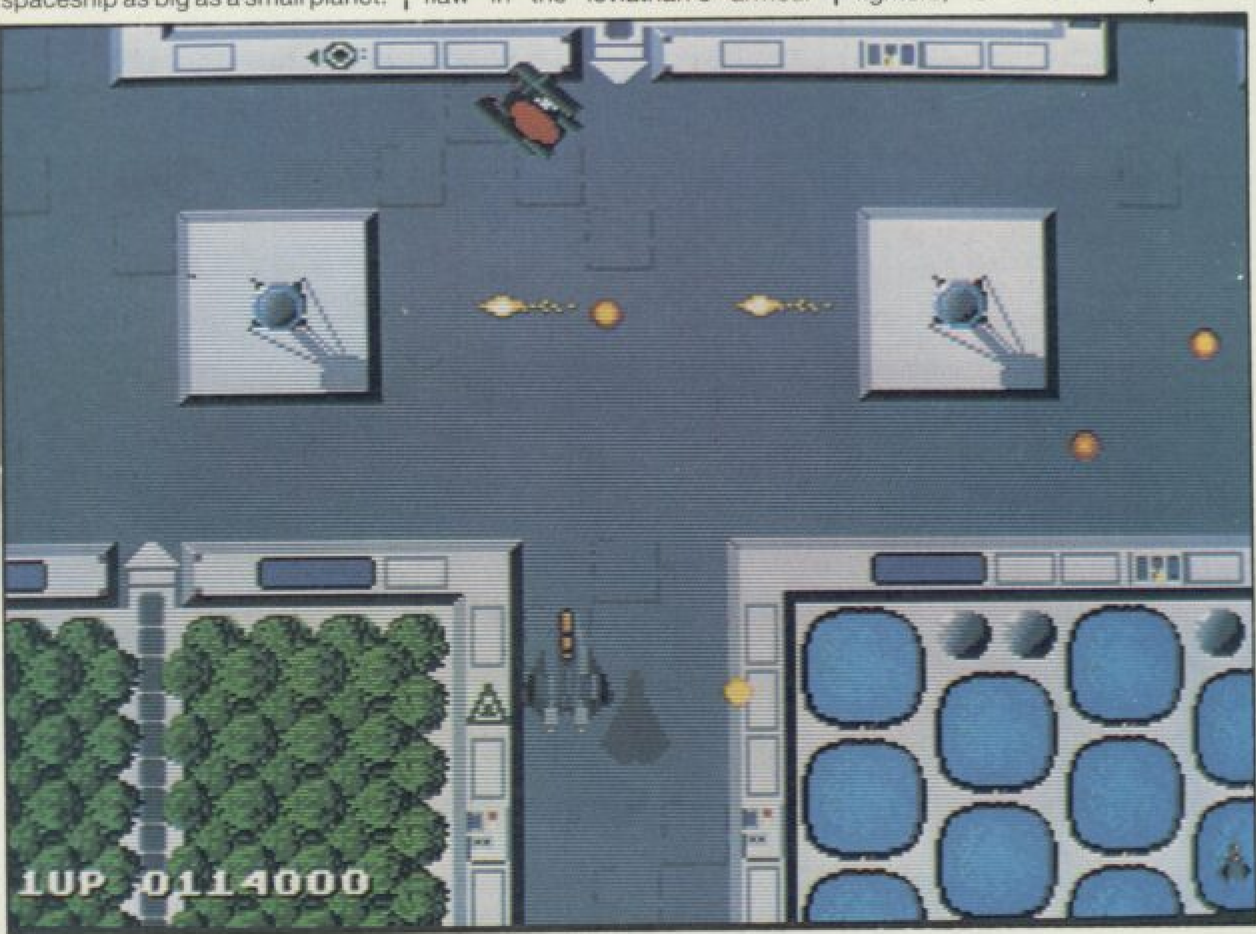
SIDEWINDER

Mastertronic

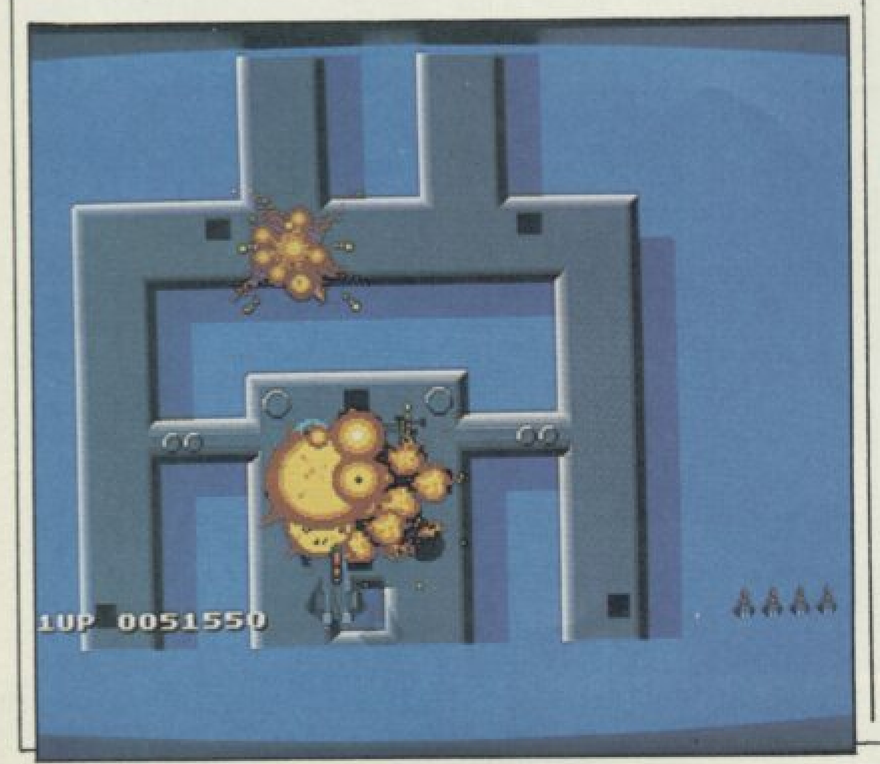
Following *Xenon* and *Rockford – The Arcade Game*, comes yet another of Arcadia's coin-ops converted to the Amiga home computer – the machine which forms the basis of the actual arcade machine. Unlike the two earlier releases however, *Sidewinder* hits the streets under Mastertronic's own name and very much at a 16-bit budget price.

To end a stalemate in the galaxy-wide war, the aliens have launched Star Killer, a gargantuan spaceship as big as a small planet. Earth's entire fleet was sent out to destroy the monstrous spaceship – to little effect. Only the tiniest flaw in the leviathan's armour offers a slender hope – a mistake in the docking bay design which might allow a single seat fighter access to the craft's interior. That will be you, of course.

Once inside Star Killer, the fighter emerges in the water distribution level. Interceptors and numerous gun emplacements mean that surviving this area will be difficult, although power packs floating down the screen can be picked up to boost the rate and destructiveness of firepower. On later levels power packs can turn the fighter semi-transparent, making it invulnerable to enemy fighters, or alternatively allow hovering to enable time to completely destroy ground targets in that area. All power packs are limited in endurance by time and distance covered.



A graphically superb, arcade quality Amiga shoot-'em-up, **Sidewinder** *represents excellent value 16-bit entertainment*



BROAD APPEAL

At the end of the water distribution level there is a corridor which, in combination with a short disk access, will take the fighter through to the next level. Here hydroponics are used to produce a wide variety of crops for the aliens which their well-armed crawlers gather in. Besides the usual gun emplacements and interceptors – five types in all – there are also mouths in the arid sands which fire yet more missiles when they show themselves. The next section is the residential level followed by the flight deck and finally the control level – destroy this and the Star Killer will blow up.

To ensure *Sidewinder*'s broad appeal, Mastertronic have thoughtfully included an excellent choice of five different difficulty levels, from Beginner to Master, all of which can be selected and changed while in play by pressing the F1 key. There is also a two-player option, with each player taking it in turn rather than both being on screen at the same time.

A great deal of game design has gone into *Sidewinder* to ensure maximum playability. The opponents always seem to be fair; once their threat is identified they can be reacted to quickly, sometimes almost subconsciously, and attention moved onto the next wave of enemy fire. This can lead to a great deal happening on screen, all of which the player can cope with until some unexpected new factor upsets the calculations.



AMIGA

Diskette: £9.99

Sidewinder **might appear to be the latest in a long-line of graphically superb Amiga shoot-'em-ups, and visually it is of arcade quality, but it is set above the competition by three important factors. Firstly the sonics; these are an aural delight which a reliable source at TGM identifies as owing a lot to, if not actually being, digitised from the BBC** Dr Who **sound FX album. Our favourite is the sound of the fighter's bullets thudding on enemy armour, but they're all very effective – and in stereo too. Second, is the ability to chose your own difficulty level, making it playable to a wide-range of people. In addition there's also the option to play the first levels, which might become easy, on a high difficulty setting, then switch to an easier one for unfamiliar levels. The most important factor, however, is** Sidewinder**'s sheer playability, without which none of the rest would matter. At the same time the game never seems to demand the rigid pattern-following some arcade games impose on players. In short** Sidewinder **is a fun shoot-'em-up which, at the price, is a must.**

OVERALL 93%

"Sidewinder is a fun shoot-'em-up which, at the price, is a must."

THE INSIDES STORY

GUTZ
Special FX/Ocean

Ocean's **Special FX** team have been hard at work again after last month's epic blaster, *Firefly*. *Gutz* is classy shoot-'em-up, from programmer **Robbie Tinman** with graphics by **Andy Rixon** and musical accompaniment from Fred Gray. The storyline and the game's objectives conjure up distinct images of the coin-op *Alien Syndrome*.

Investigating a ten million ton alien ambling slowly through space is no picnic – except for the alien when you prove incompetent. Fortunately the planet-eating brute decided not to chew but merely swallow you whole, leaving you relatively safe within its major intestine.

The objective is to travel through the alien's body – split into 16 sections (four levels, with four sub-levels each) – destroying its kidneys, lungs, heart and brain; one of these major organs appears at the end of each level.

The graphics are nicely drawn and thankfully not as gory as you might expect!

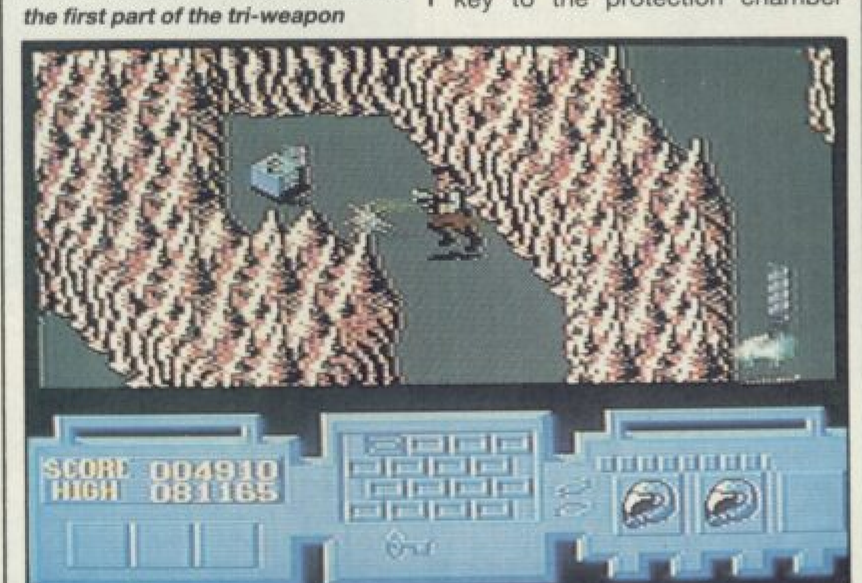
ORGAN-ISER

The body of the alien is a complex maze of passages and dead-ends infested by a multitude of pests and parasites, all of which are deadly. Extra armament can be collected throughout the journey – different weapons kill different pests – there is no single weapon available that can defeat all the varieties encountered. An extra life is awarded at 10,000 points, which is mean, considering the amount of mayhem faced.

A map may be found on level 1 and it can be used at any time to show your exact location in the maze. However, its use is restricted by a time limit.

In preparation to kill the organs, three parts of a laser cannon and a key to the protection chamber have to be located within the sub-levels. Having defeated a parasite-spitting organ the next level is made accessible, and this format continues until the brain is reached and destroyed.

On the first level: our hero discovers the first part of the tri-weapon





COMMODORE 64/128
Cassette: £8.95

Gutz is the kind of game to get worked up over. Although it is not frustrating, should concentration lapse within the complicated mazes, you could find yourself on a hiding to nowhere. Gutz is immediately playable – the map and first weapon are not far from the starting point – but as progress is made, so the gameplay becomes increasingly difficult. Although the animation is slick, the sound – while good – does little to enhance atmosphere, and generally Gutz is not as polished as Firefly. But it still provides a challenge and instils immense satisfaction as each level is completed.

OVERALL 77%

SPECTRUM 48/128
Cassette: £7.95

Should be available by the time you read this. The same game, but obviously the graphics will be of the monochromatic style.

" . . . not as polished as Firefly**, but it still provides a challenge . . . "**

VERSION UPDATE

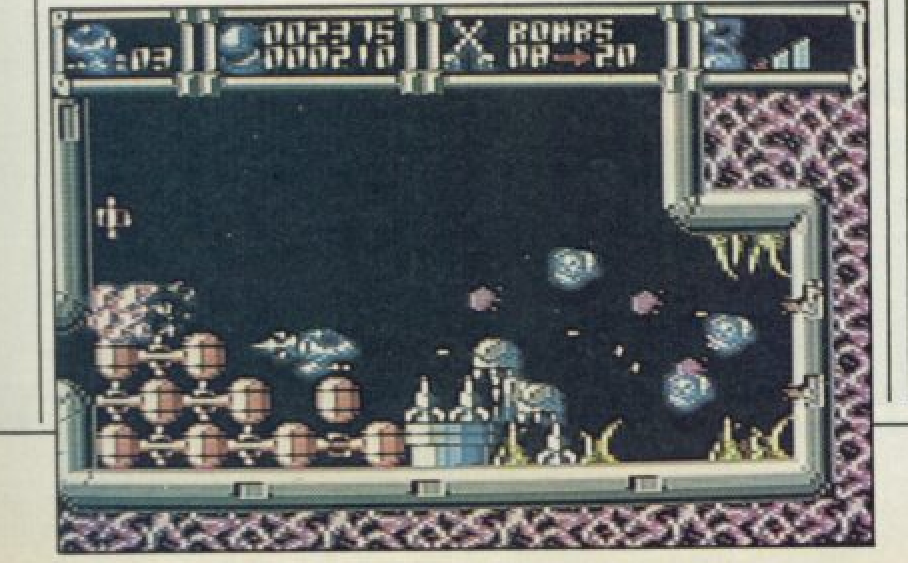
Conversion of the month

CYBERNOID
Hewson

Commodore 64/128
Cassette: £9.99
Diskette: £14.99

RAFFAELE CECCO's futuristic shoot-'em-up is a massive Spectrum/Amstrad hit (reviewed TGM**005**). The C64 conversion, by Nick Jones, has been done very much keeping in mind past complaints that Spectrum-to-Commodore conversions are frowned upon if the resulting game retains its graphical origins too much.

A series of interconnected rooms lead to depots where Cybernoid – the fighting machine – aims to deposit valuable supplies retrieved from renegade robot forces that have invaded the planet and left it barren of all supplies. There is only one route to follow through the tunnel as, having entered one room, you cannot retreat. Rooms are equipped with automatic defence systems and swarm with enemy robots – though Cybernoid has a series of six weaponry systems to fight with. Strategic use of the weapons is essential – the different rooms need different use of weapons to overcome individual hazards.



COMMENT

Cybernoid, an excellent strategic shoot-'em-up, is equally as impressive on the Commodore as its Spectrum and Amstrad counterparts. The colour used is, unlike the extensively bright Spectrum version, mainly metallic – blues, greys and purples with the odd bit of galactic greenery. This has the advantage of giving the game atmosphere – of a sort. Quite a novelty for the Commodore is the Define Keys options, and surprisingly Cybernoid plays a lot better on keys than joystick. Sound has been well executed, with either a theme tune or sound FX running throughout the game. Cybernoid retains its addictive challenge and represents one of the best Commodore buys this month.

COMMODORE 64/128
OVERALL 85%

A COMMODORE ON YOUR COMMODORE

STRIKE FLEET
Electronic Arts

Once again the ***Lucasfilm*** *team of* ***Noah Falstein, Ken Mackilin*** *and* ***Larry Holland****, who last gave us the PHM Pegasus*, have turned in a seafaring simulation. This team of writers – whose interests range from fantasy artwork to prehistoric archaeology – are already planning their next collaboration, but it's a well-kept secret.

Ten missions are on offer, from a simple patrol through to World War III conflicts against Russian naval and air forces. Alternatively, the seasoned commander can try the campaign made up of the four most difficult scenarios on the disk. Whatever the decision, load and save options are available upon completing a mission.

Once a mission has been selected, the Nato shipyard is displayed. Vessels from each warship class can be added to or taken from the fleet depending on both the commander's personal choice of fleet composition and the mission chosen.

Once the fleet is ready, the mission begins. Following in the same style as *PHM Pegasus*, *Strike Fleet* offers two views, one from the bridge of the currently controlled ship and a map view showing the combat area and the vessels detected within it. Orders can be issued from the map screen to individual ships or the fleet as a whole and, if necessary, the fleet can be split up into smaller groups, very useful if a large area of sea has to be searched quickly.

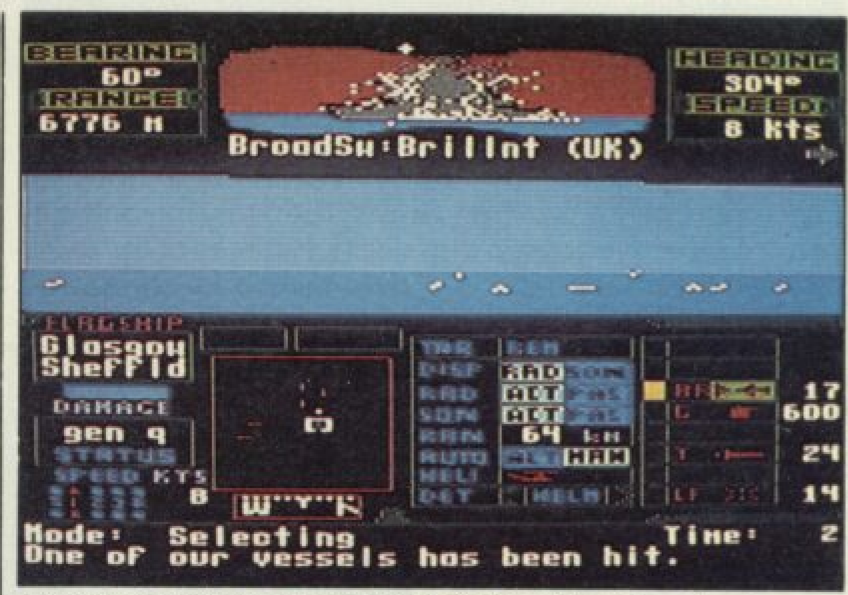
FLEET OF STRENGTH

The *Pegasus* influence is also apparent in the bridge view. Split into three, the top section is the binocular view of targetted craft and target data, the middle section shows the ocean ahead and the lower third displays the main systems of the currently controlled ship. Extra features available to the *Strike Fleet* commander include a sonar display for detecting enemy attack submarines, on board helicopters to provide wide range radar and sonar cover, remote and manual tracking systems and an extensive array of defensive and offensive weapons.

During a mission, the commander can expect to encounter patrol boats, cargo ships, mighty battle cruisers, missile frigates, attack submarines and air force bombers as well as the deadly anti-ship missiles frequently launched. In all conflicts the commander is faced with the decision to fire first or wait until fired upon. The decision made determines the fate of the fleet, and unwarranted provocation of the enemy invariably leads to total fleet destruction and a court-martial. The key to success is to exercise caution at all times, use limited force and above all try to keep the fleet intact.

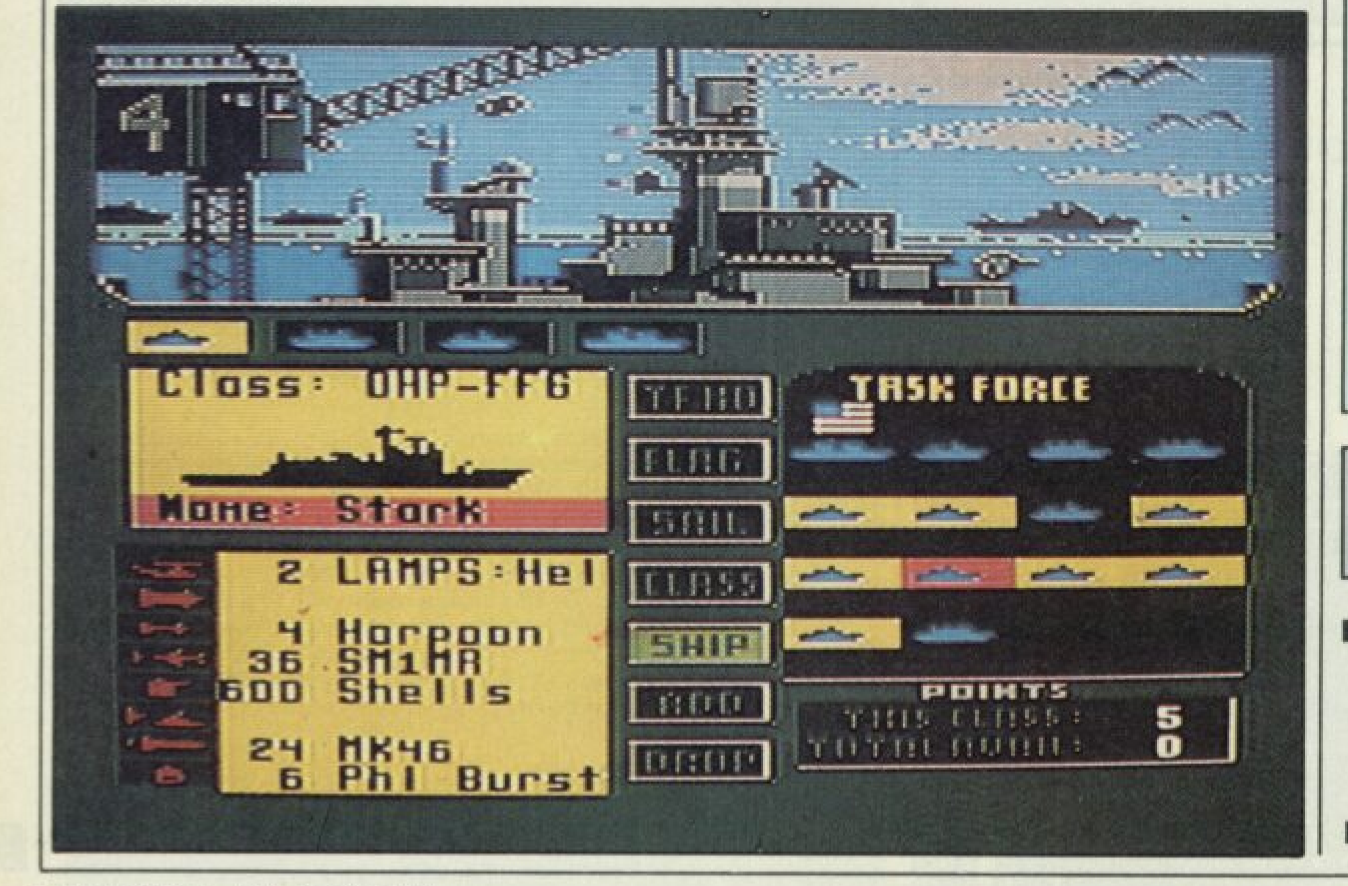
On the armament front, anti-ship and anti-air missiles are available, a ship gun provides long range firepower, submarines can be taken out with torpedoes or ASROC missiles. As a last ditch defence against incoming missiles, chaff can be launched or the Phalanx close-in gun activated.

Lucasfilm know what makes a good game. *Strike Fleet* has action, strategy, depth and playability. Not quite a departure from *PHM Pegasus* but enjoyable nonetheless.



The main attack screen as seen from the bridge with the binocular view showing a successful hit in close up – Commodore 64 screen

The attractive in-port screen where materiel and supplies are loaded – Commodore 64 screen



COMMODORE 64
Diskette: £14.95

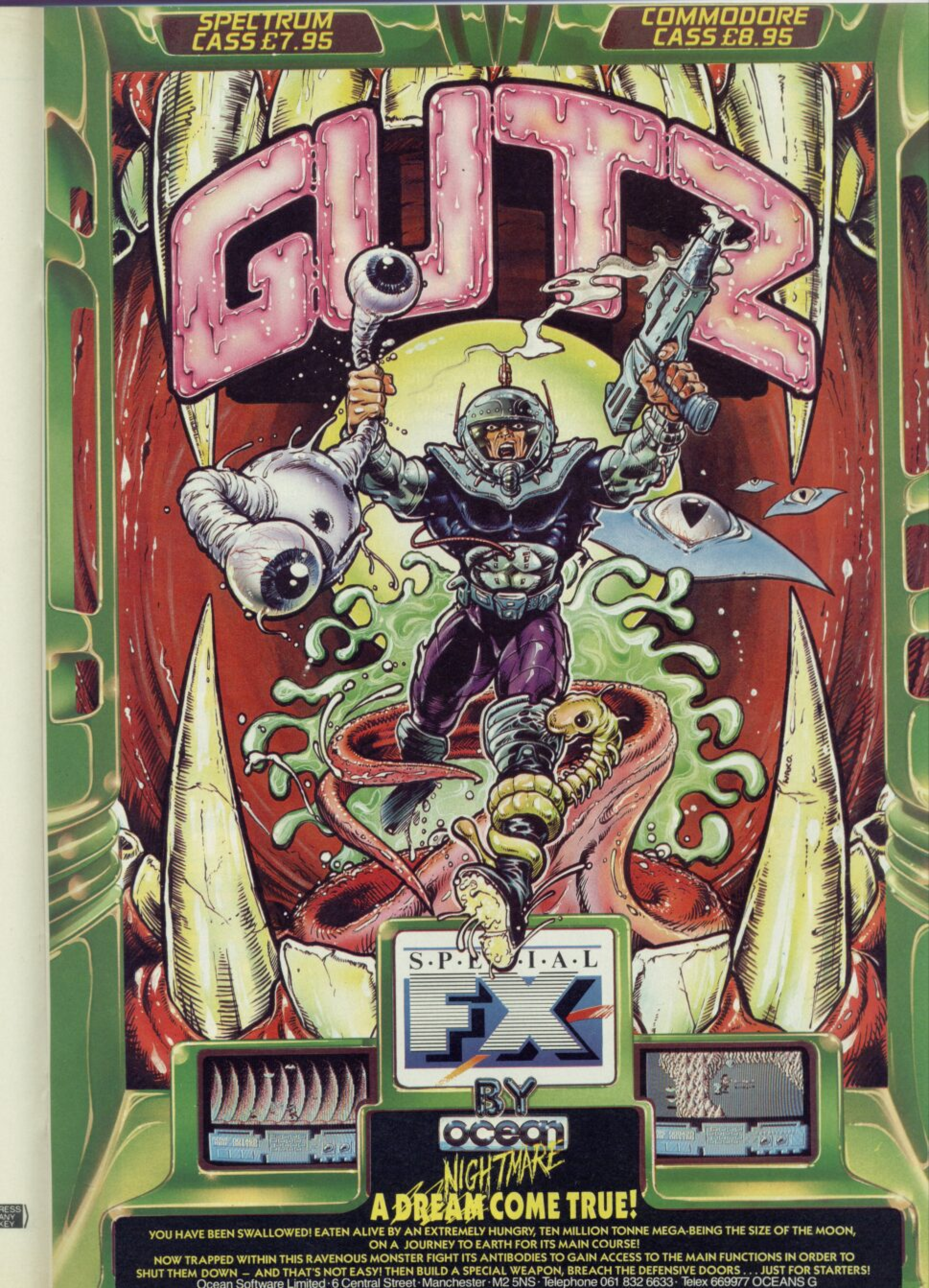
The challenge is even stronger in Strike Fleet **than its predecessor,** PHM Pegasus**. The ten missions are no pushover. Even the first few tasks, such as the relatively low-risk Stark Realities mission can pose problems if you're not careful. Graphically, the game closely follows the successful style of** PHM Pegasus**, and is absorbing, thought-provoking, demanding and a highly realistic computer representation of modern naval warfare.**

OVERALL 85%

OTHER FORMATS

There are no plans to convert to any other format.

"Strike Fleet has action, strategy, depth and playability."


SPECTRUM
CASS £7.95
COMMODORE
CASS £8.95
GUTZ
S·P·E·C·I·A·L
FX
BY
ocean
A ~~DREAM~~ NIGHTMARE COME TRUE!
YOU HAVE BEEN SWALLOWED! EATEN ALIVE BY AN EXTREMELY HUNGRY, TEN MILLION TONNE MEGA-BEING THE SIZE OF THE MOON, ON A JOURNEY TO EARTH FOR ITS MAIN COURSE!
NOW TRAPPED WITHIN THIS RAVENOUS MONSTER FIGHT ITS ANTIBODIES TO GAIN ACCESS TO THE MAIN FUNCTIONS IN ORDER TO SHUT THEM DOWN — AND THAT'S NOT EASY! THEN BUILD A SPECIAL WEAPON, BREACH THE DEFENSIVE DOORS . . . JUST FOR STARTERS!
Ocean Software Limited · 6 Central Street · Manchester · M2 5NS · Telephone 061 832 6633 · Telex 669977 OCEANS G

Bob Winner



Initiating his internal computer, Bob Winner, android No. 0, could at last breathe again . . . New York . . . the Docks were deserted . . . or were they? No! The OTHER ONE was there . . . one of the men sent to destroy him . . . He had a mission to complete, but first he needed to find the weapons to defeat his opponents. A gun-fight, a boxing bout, a kick fight. But that was not all. He knew he would have to overcome many other obstacles. The quicksand and marshes, the giant wasps he knew would attack him.
Strength alone would not suffice. He needed intelligence and wits if he was ever to reach the secret temple . . .

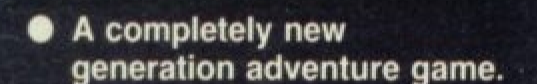








AMSTRAD/ATARI SCREENSHOTS



- A completely new generation adventure game.
- Amazing digitized graphics – set in London, New York and Paris.
- Joystick or keyboard.

AVAILABLE ON:

SYSTEM	FORMAT	PRICE
Commodore 64/128	Cassette	£9.99
Commodore 64/128	Disc	£14.99
Amstrad/Schneider	Cassette	£9.99
Amstrad/Schneider	Disc	£14.99
Amstrad PCW		£19.99
Atari ST		£19.99
IBM PC + Compatibles		£24.99

LORICIELS LTD.
Elite Systems Limited, Eastern Avenue, Lichfield, Staffs WS13 6RX
Telex: 336130 ELITE G

CLONED AGAIN

GOTHIK
Firebird

The list the of games which have cloned *Gauntlet* since its arrival on the home computer scene is extensive. It is a genre which has tended to be successful to date, although few have seriously challenged the gameplay or addictiveness of the original. Could the new Firebird release, *Gothik* be the one to topple *Gauntlet* from its pedestal?

The wizard Hasrinaxx – an accomplished mage – was a great friend to the people of Belorn. Life was good until one dark day an evil lord arrived, heading a great army. The people feared the tyrant for he could cast powerful spells and they would not bear arms against him. Hasrinaxx tried in vain to defeat the conquerors, but without help from the people he failed and was taken prisoner.

The evil lord enslaved the people and set them to work building a castle. When complete, he cast a spell over Hasrinaxx to ensure the wizard could never be set free. He split the mage's body into six parts, and sealed each in a secret chamber guarded by a ferocious demon.

One day a young warrior was passing the castle, when a mysterious voice spoke to him, beckoning him to enter and rescue the wizard. He could not refuse. You take the part of the warrior, honour bound to recover and reunite the six parts of Hasrinaxx's body.

Olaf or Olga are busy seeking six parts of the wizard's body to put him back together again – a **Gauntlet style game for the Amstrad**

FLUID DRUID

Gothik offers alternate characters to play: Olga, who possesses strong magical powers, or Olaf, strong of arm and swift in the use of arrows. Three weapons ar available at first: lightning bolts, arrows and fireballs – the latter being capable of destroying walls.

The game display is in traditional *Gauntlet* style, ie: seen in plan form from above. Potions to both aid and hinder are hidden within the castle which can increase your weapon inventory and power, nullify enemy fire and befriend new creatures. Their effect may last for only a few seconds or for up to a minute.

Other useful items to be found are: food to replenish energy, gold, firestorms, quivers, the chalice of wisdom, magic relics, shields, and bonus lives. Some are to be found in corridors, others in rooms guarded by bracken – which thankfully may be incinerated by using a fireball. However, be warned, excessive use of either fireballs or lightning bolts depletes your magic strength rapidly.

Once a level has been successfully explored and the bonus items collected, entering a portal whisks you on to the next level.

AMSTRAD CPC
Cassette: £8.95
Diskette: £14.95

Gothik **is a competent example of the** Gauntlet **genre, with bright and cheerful, if slightly blocky character sprites stomping around the dungeon. The music and sound effects are jolly enough, though nothing spectacular. Animation is basic: the main character doesn't move his/her legs when walking vertically, and overall the speed is slow. Olga and Olaf look too similar on the option screen, thankfully their respective names are highlighted to avoid too much confusion.**

OVERALL 57%

OTHER FORMATS

The Amstrad version wins the 8-bit release stakes by a hair's breadth – two others should be available by the time you read this. Commodore 64/128: Cassette £9.95, Diskette: £12.95 and Spectrum: Cassette £7.95

" . . . Gothik **is a competent example of the** Gauntlet **genre . . . "**

VERSION UPDATE

The old grey fox

SKYFOX
Electronic Arts

Atari ST: £14.95

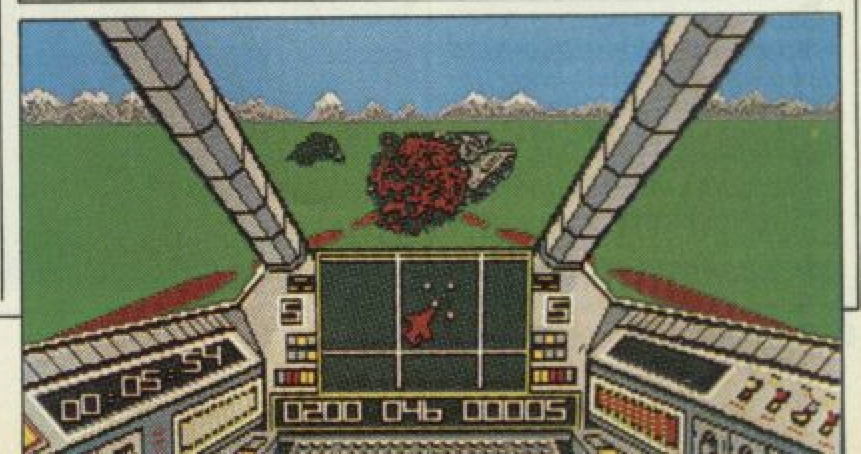
FOUR years after its first software flight – it was a big Commodore 64 hit, and didn't fare too badly on the Spectrum – *Skyfox* has been rolled out on the Atari ST's electronic runway. The action may be set on a Federation asteroid base, but, in a startling similarity to Earth, it too has a requirement for inexperienced pilots to save it from certain destruction. The craft designed to undertake this task, Skyfox, is equipped with lasers, heat-seeking and radar-guided missiles. This armament is put to good use when taking on enemy motherships capable of producing tanks and jets which aim to destroy Skyfox and its vital bases.

For pilots lacking the skill to instantly tackle one of the seven different invasion scenarios, there are eight training missions to practice on and five skill levels.

COMMENT

COMBINING strategic elements with rapid-fire air-to-air and air-to-ground arcade action, Skyfox **should be good. Unfortunately the action, while competent, is nothing special, and the strategic element – destroying the motherships first while guarding home-bases – is simplistic. No attempt has been made to rewrite the game in the interim, it is an exact copy of the 64 version of old. At its low 16-bit price,** Skyfox **offers reasonable fun, but nothing to seriously compete with the likes of either** Gunship **or, indeed, more recent Electronic Arts releases.**

ATARI ST
OVERALL 60%



TO BOULDER GO

ROCKFORD – THE ARCADE GAME
Melbourne House

Rockford started life as a lowly sprite dashing about the caves in *Boulder Dash*, grabbing diamonds and suffering numerous rockfalls; and he returned in *Rockford's Riot*. Such was his success, that besides becoming a margin star in ZZAP 64!, more sequels have been made of *Boulder Dash* than of *Jaws*.



Unusually attractive colouring for the PC

Rockford has changed, the famous sprite has been dressed up in costume. According to which one of five worlds he visits Rockford appears as either a hunter, chef, cowboy, spaceman or doctor. This Arcadia coin-op conversion remains essentially the same as when *Boulder Dash* first appeared; to escape from each level Rockford has to pick up a specific number of objects and find the exit door before time runs out. On some screens getting objects simply involves moving boulders by either pushing them or munching the stuff they rest on. Puzzles of this sort can be very intricate and on later screens there are added complications such as needing to kill monsters by dropping boulders on them and using explosions to destroy walls.

TREASURE HUNT

A status line at the top of the screen shows the number of treasures you need to collect, time remaining, lives left, level number and which world you are on. Each world contains four levels, (the order differs according to your computer make) and each level is made up of four screens – there are 80 screens overall.

Given that visually *Rockford* is not great – it never relied on that – and sound maintains a low profile, the fact remains that the underlying gameplay is as addictive and challenging as ever – simple to play but very difficult to master.

IBM PC
Diskette: £19.99

The decision to transform the Rockford sprite for the arcades was probably quite justified, but on lesser machines it is a drawback. On the first world he's poorly drawn and the graphics lack appeal. Subsequent worlds are more attractive but rarely match the charm of the original game. Thoughtfully the packaging includes both 3" and 5.25" disks.

OVERALL 70%

AMIGA
Diskette: £19.99

Due any day, the only surprise is that it wasn't the first version out, seeing as how the conversion is a straight download from Arcadia's Amiga coin-op board. With possibly better sound, it should be pretty similar to the ST version.

BLOWING IN THE WIND

THE CHERNOBYL SYNDROME
US Gold

US Gold caused a controversial storm with *Raid Over Moscow* some years back, and they have done it again with this simulation. Accusations of 'sensationalism' have been thrown at the title and its packaging – which is obviously designed to catch the eye, although it hardly reflects the more serious nature of a game that asks whether you could have prevented the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. There are no other format releases planned.

The accompanying instructions – detailed, but with a few vital points inexplicably missing – also give an interesting account of the famous nuclear mishap, plus some useful background on how nuclear reactors operate – and misbehave.

Put simply, the reactor core is made up of thousands of uranium oxide rods clad in zirconium tubes. When the uranium is brought together it creates enormous heat – used to produce steam to drive turbines and make electricity – and radiation. Radiation-absorbing graphite rods can be lowered into the core to control the vast release of energy.

First you log onto the power station monitoring computer, through which you are informed of the plant's current status. By typing in command words, you control the reactor's systems. Through the terminal five displays are available: a plan of the plant; a graph showing how much of the control rods are inside the core; a diagram of the core displaying its temperature and that of the coolant which is shown flowing through the reactor; a panel of power gauges; a panel of alarm lights; an annunciator display showing the status of valves and other indicators.

TIME TO SCRAM

The computer runs checks on the systems, shown on screen as messages. These inform you of dangerous pressures or temperatures in the core which could lead to problem situations. Your task is to adjust the status of one or more systems using the command window in the lower part of the screen. If the simulation indicates that a vital part of the reactor system is failing, there is the possibility of a heat buildup or a radiation leak. If you cannot quickly think of a solution to the problem, the best alternative is to initiate a SCRAM (effectively shutting down the plant) and evacuate!

Despite the sensationalism of the packaging, *Chernobyl* is really a very straight-laced, inoffensive simulation with nothing much in the way of exciting action. Its interest lies mainly in the

ATARI ST

Diskette: £19.99

Atari ST-owning readers familiar with Boulder Dash **should welcome the arrival of** Rockford **from the arcades. Like Melbourne House's previous title** Xenon, **the conversion has proved remarkably accurate. Colour is used extensively and the scrolling is adequate. Very professional in appearance, the graphics – although a little on the small side - are detailed and in general use colour well, with the exception of one or two garishly coloured levels. A good implementation of the coin-op with enough in it to keep any** Boulder Dash **addict playing for ages.**

OVERALL 74%

OTHER FORMATS

8-bit versions may follow on Mastertronic's new budget-plus MAD-X range.

" . . . the gameplay is as addictive and challenging as ever."

VERSION UPDATE

Our man Albatross

ROLLING THUNDER
US Gold

Commodore 64/128
Cassette:£9.99
Diskette: £12.99

NAMCO's coin-op game, *Rolling Thunder*, fully reviewed for the Spectrum and Amstrad CPC in TGM004, is now available for the Commodore 64/128. Assuming the role of undercover cop Albatross and undertaking his battle against Geldra, you fight your way through ten levels of multi-scrolling action, tackling the obstacles and armed opposition encountered. The further you get the tougher the action. To complete the game, Albatross has to fight his way to, and subsequently defeat Maboo, head of the evil organisation intent on world domination.



COMMENT

Graphically identical to the Atari ST version, it even incorporates the same mediocre scrolling, although sonically it is far superior. The music is identical to the arcade game and discreetly accompanies the sound FX without ever threatening to overwhelm them. When doors open you don't need to look to know what is happening – unlike on the Atari ST – and gunshot noises are similarly convincing. This makes the Amiga Rolling Thunder **superior, although it does cost five pounds more than the Atari ST game.**

AMIGA
OVERALL 79%

COMMENT

Namco's fast and furious arcade game should have translated well, unfortunately this is not the case. The graphics of the animated characters and backdrops are blocky, drab and lack detail. This, combined with the shallow music and basic sound effects, makes Rolling Thunder **an average platforms-and-shooting game that lacks the addictive qualities of the other 8-bit versions.**

COMMODORE 64/128
OVERALL 58%

COMMENT

The scrolling is ropy and the tune is listless – as are the sound FX. The graphics, however, are bright, detailed and improve substantially after level 2, although character animation could be better. Visually Rolling Thunder **is a neat conversion of the arcade game and retains its consistent, although repetitive, playability.**

ATARI ST
OVERALL 74%

thoroughness with which the programmers have researched the issues of nuclear power: this complexity gives a strong, if simplified, feeling of control over the reactor. The game can be bewildering at first, but a great deal of satisfaction is gained once you begin to successfully maintain the plant.

One of several rather tedious looking screens – Commodore 64

COMMODORE 64/128

Cassette: £9.99
Diskette: £11.99

Graphically reminiscent of Open University lectures, with functional, colourful and clear diagrams, Chernobyl **does provide a credible simulation with reasonable grabbing potential if you have the patience to persevere, and while you do, it's supported by some very atmospheric and disturbing sound FX. As a simulation it's good (though the instructions could have been clearer), as a game it's reasonable: either way, it's engrossing and unusual enough to deserve attention, despite the silly box.**

OVERALL 64%

"Chernobyl gives a strong, if simplified, feeling of control over the reactor."

ROCK'N' BOWL

THE FLINTSTONES
GrandSlam Entertainments

Taking time off from advertising breakfast cereals, the Flintstones will soon appear on most home computers via GrandSlam Entertainments. It isn't the first time the famous stone-age family has been pixelated, Quicksilva had a less than first-rate attempt with *Yabba Dabba Doo* when the company was under Argus Press – the umbrella that so impressed Stephen Hall, he bought it, and with it rights to a subsequent Flintstones game. The programming is by **Teque Software Development**, who also did the well-received *Terramex*.

The only excitement Fred 'Twinkle Toes' Flintstone wants in life, is to do battle with Barney 'Butter Fingers' Rubble in a game of bowls at the Bedrock Super-Bowl. But life is never so simple; before he is allowed to, there is a promise made to Wilma to fulfill: redecorate the living room.

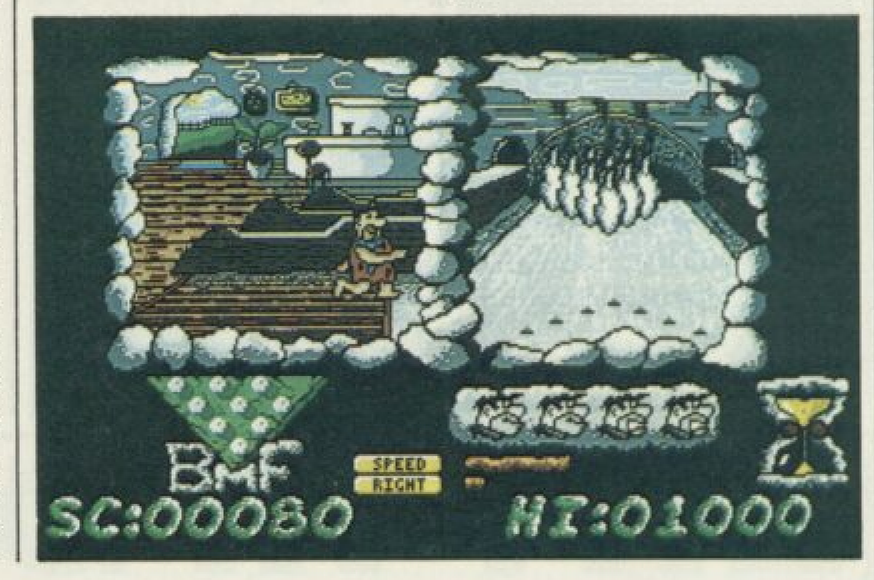
Fred's mood is as grey as the paint he daubs on the walls, but he has to hurry if he wants to finish before the bowling alley closes. A ladder helps reach the top of the wall, but when he moves lower down Fred has to watch out for young Pebbles who has decided to scribble on the stonework. Returning his daughter to her playpen entails Fred dropping the brush, and since this is actually a squirrel, it happily bounds about until he can recapture the darned thing.

Scoring is somewhat out of the ordinary: passing time is shown by an hourglass, when the sand runs out, Fred loses one of four mini-hourglasses, when all are lost, he loses one of four lives and has to start his task again. When this happens, Fred doesn't start gaining points again until he scores more than on his previous attempt.

DIY complete, it is time to climb into the car and race to the Super-Bowl before it closes. Avoiding the many rocks on the road is quite a task though. Hitting any at high speed results in a wheel dropping off, forcing Fred to stop and replace it before he can continue his journey. These delays can be fatal if Fred is late and the alley closed – he loses a life.

IN LIKE FLINTSTONE

Once at the bowling ally the contest begins. The screen is divided in two: on the left side Fred stands ready to bowl, you can move him across the alley to select where he throws from. You can also set the spin he puts on the ball and control the speed of the throw



Every prehistoric Fred's dream: an afternoon spent playing bowls with yer mates down at the Bedrock Alley

VERSION UPDATE
Planet carefully

MEGA-APOCALYPSE
Martech

Spectrum: £8.99

RELEASED on the Commodore 64 late last year, **Mega-Apocalypse** enjoyed a great deal of acclaim as a superb update of *Crazy Comets*. The scenario, then as now, is refreshingly direct – travel through space, find strange new worlds and destroy them.

Divided into two sections, in the first you add equipment to your ship by crashing into some objects, while avoiding collisions with the comets whizzing about the screen. In the second alien worlds whirl around in dazzling combat manoeuvres attempting to collide with you. When they first appear in the distance, the planets can be despatched easily, but growing nearer, they require numerous hits to destroy them. At a level's end a mega-planet must be disposed of before the next level can be reached. Another equipment screen follows and the whole cycle is repeated. Other nuisances are comets which appear without warning at the edges of the screens and large planets that can materialise anywhere.

COMMENT

Mega-Apocalypse **is yet another example of the well-worn truism that Commodore 64 shoot-'em-ups rarely convert well to the Spectrum. The Commodore version included a stunning star field, speech and a two-players on screen option – none of these appear on the Spectrum game. Music and sound effects are reasonable on the 128, but non-existent on the 48K version. Equipment add-ons are purported to be numerous, but on initial levels all that's available is a joint rotate-ship and auto-fire system. The latter allows rotation to be controlled by the fire button, which gets confusing on equipment screens as control then reverts back to normal. Difficult and repetitive** Mega-Apocalypse**'s magic has largely been lost in the conversion.**

SPECTRUM
OVERALL 55%

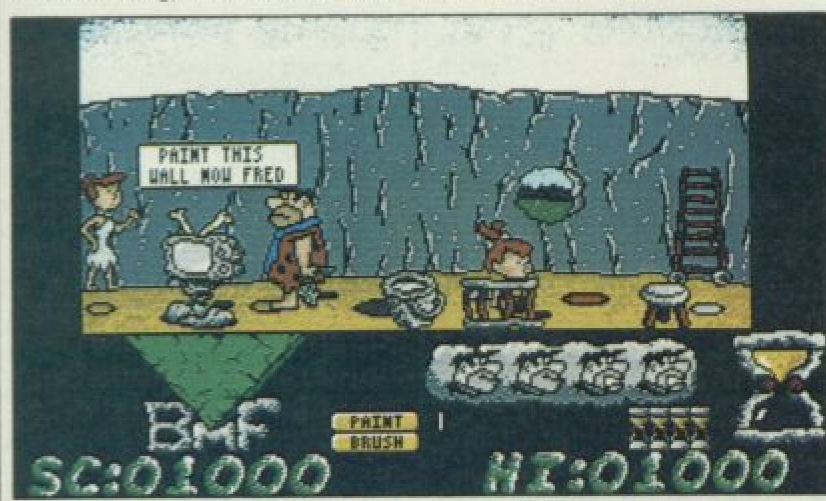
ATARI ST

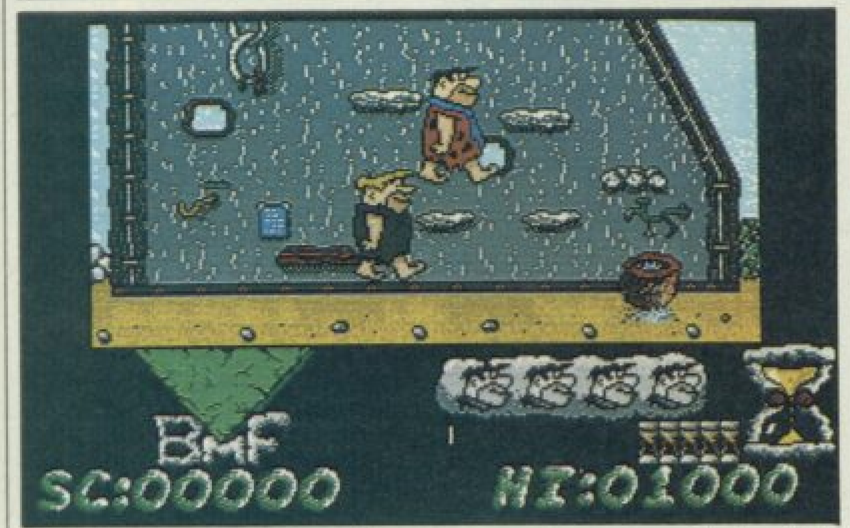
Diskette: £19.95

Identical to the Amiga version in graphics and gameplay, only the sound differs – as one might expect – through being slightly poorer in quality.

OVERALL 75%

Wilma's mother's coming to visit, and the ol' homestead could do with a spot of redecorating, not Fred's best-loved chore – Amiga screen





with the fire button. As in a standard ten-pin bowling game each player gets two throws per turn (or frame) and ten frames per game, unless a player gets a strike – in which case he might have another frame added on at the end. Three games make up a match meaning Fred gets to bowl 60 times before proceeding onto the next section.

At the end of each turn Barney is shown having his two bowls. Unlike all the other game sections the bowling has no time limit, even if Fred loses he can go onto the final section. Watching Barney bowl may initially give helpful hints, but soon becomes an unnecessary time-waster in very long games. The length of each game is made yet longer by the long-winded restacking of the pins after each bowl – this is taking realism too far.

Incentive to do well is provided by points, with Fred's bowling score being doubled and added to his game total – once Barney's score is subtracted – at the end of each game.

Fred eventually returns home to find Wilma distressed by the disappearance of Pebbles, he sets off to search for his daughter and finds her clinging to a girder on a building site. The site is haunted by enormous nuts and bolts which have to be avoided. Should he be too cautious however, time runs out and Fred loses a life. Should Mr Flintstone lose all his lives, Barney will rescue Pebbles showing Fred to be a miserable failure.

SPECTRUM 48K

Cassette: £8.95

AMSTRAD CPC

Cassette: £8.95
Diskette: £12.95

COMMODORE 64/128

Cassette: £9.95
Diskette: £14.95

MSX II

Cassette:£8.95

Release dates for all 8-bit versions: end of April. THE GAMES MACHINE is reliably informed that all formats will have gameplay identical to the review above – even the Spectrum will have a digitised 'Yabba Dabba Doo!' at its start.

AMIGA

Diskette: £19.95

The Flintstones **has graphics that could challenge the TV cartoon which, together with an excellent rendition of the theme-tune, played throughout, plus a digitised 'Yabba Dabba Doo', establishes first class presentation. The game is no less impressive, although from the beginning, progress is difficult – perhaps, with only 20 screens in total, they thought players should work damned hard to see them! However, the aesthetic appeal created by the sound and graphics is sufficient to impel you to reach the next screen or level. If you have the patience,** The Flintstones **could provide an amusing, if generally tough challenge.**

OVERALL 76%

" . . . graphics that could challenge the cartoon . . . an amusing, tough challenge."

VERSION UPDATE

Court of the crimson king

RASTAN SAGA
Imagine

Spectrum Cassette: £7.95
Spectrum+3 Diskette: £14.95

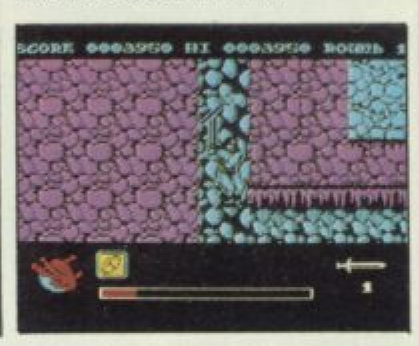
MARANNA was a peaceful land, until the wicked wizard, Karg came along. Thwarted in his attempts to overthrow the throne, Karg takes revenge by opening a mystical portal that allows access from the pits of hell. Evil creatures now roam the land leaving death and chaos in their wake. Fortunately one man has proved himself capable of facing the demonic hordes, the king of Maranna, Rastan.

You take the part of Rastan and undertake his task to travel through the kingdom destroying all in his path until you reach the distant land ruled by Karg. There you must face and defeat the evil one in his deadliest guise – the soul sucking dragon.

The game is split into six levels, each one filled with blood-thirsty creatures from hell – necessitating the five lives awarded to Rastan.

Armed with a basic sword at the outset, Rastan finds more powerful weapons as he traverses the landscape; a mace, an axe and a lethal fire sword. Killing the demons earns points and reveals any useful objects they may be carrying, including a shield that reduces damage, medicine to replenish energy, and a rod that awards a bonus. Only when Rastan has fought his way through the many realms of his besieged kingdom, can he finally challenge Karg, defeat him and restore peace once more to Maranna.

Nicely detailed graphics help this excellent Spectrum romp



COMMENT

Rastan Saga **is a great hack and slay game in the best tradition. Graphically sound, the macho, axe-wielding Barbarian sprite cheerfully slaughters his way across the nicely detailed backdrops. The various demonic hordes are also well drawn and fulfill their attempts to slay Rastan with great zeal. The game hooks you from the start, and great enjoyment is to be found hacking the evil minions and sending them back to the hell from which they spawned. Overall an enjoyable romp through the violent world of the Barbarian king.**

SPECTRUM
OVERALL 85%

ON THE REBOUND

PINBALL CONSTRUCTION SET
Electronic Arts

In a way, this should really be a Version Update review, because *Pinball Construction Set* made its first appearance on the Commodore 64 back in 1985 on the Ariolasoft label. But as that was over two years ago now, it seems only fair to give this new PC version the full treatment. Critical response to the original 8-bit kit was highly favourable. Now Electronic Arts are making it available to PC owners in the UK.

Pinball Construction Set, or *PCS*, is just what it claims to be – a complete pinball design utility which requires no programming skills whatsoever. Once designed games can be saved to disk for later playing, and just to give you the flavour of things there are five example games included.

The main screen display is divided in two vertically: blank pinball table on the left, design icons on the right. Of these, 17 are pinball parts – flippers, bumpers etc – in the form of polygons, which can be moved over onto the table by using the hand pointer. Included among these parts are such things as magnets to twist the ball's movement and lanes to make pathways for the ball. In addition, there are several command icons for use in designing the polygons used in the pinball game.

SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

The first of these reshape icons, an arrow, creates control squares on the polygons and game sides when selected. If the pointer – now an arrow – is placed on one of these squares, the shape can be dragged into a dramatic new form. More control squares can be added by the second icon – a hammer – or eliminated by the third icon – scissors. This last function is useful if you have pulled something into an unworkable new form – delete the square and the mistake disappears too. But be warned, the flexibility of this system of design and the ease with which it can be done, means that the pinball novice (as we discovered at THE GAMES MACHINE when one such had a go) can rapidly design tables of magnificent unplayability!

Next command icon is a paint brush with three colour choices below. (A wide choice of these three colours can be cycled through on some machines – and doesn't include standard background black.) At the crudest level the brush and paints can be used simply to change the colour of selected shapes. However when used in conjunction with a magnifying glass icon then pretty much anything on the board, plus the score/title area to the right, can be decorated a pixel at a time. If you have the patience you could do a fancy logo for the game.

One of the demo screens, just to show how it's done, complete with logo



Testing the game under construction is performed by another icon, while a world symbol gives the player control over gravity, ball speed, bumper kick and the elasticity of sides and flippers. The next icon means the player can establish scores and even sounds for targets, plus bonuses. The final icon is a disk by which games can be saved, loaded, played and copied. (Copies can only be played with the *PCS* disk.)

Amstrad PC players should note that the joystick option refers to analogue joysticks used with a joystick card.

PC
Diskette: £14.95

Pinball Construction Set **is without any doubt the last word in such utilities. Its icon system is essentially straightforward, though with such a wealth of options extremely complex results can be obtained – given sufficient patience. If you're a fan of pinball games** PCS **is unmissable and could even be used to recreate favourite pinball tables such as** Spy Hunter **and** Space Shuttle**. For non-fans the enormous range of options available might prove enticing for the creative but essentially it is just a pinball game, and whether you like such games or not should essentially govern your reaction to this admittedly superb utility.**

OVERALL 84%

"Pinball Construction Set **is without doubt the last word in such utilities.**"

VERSION UPDATE

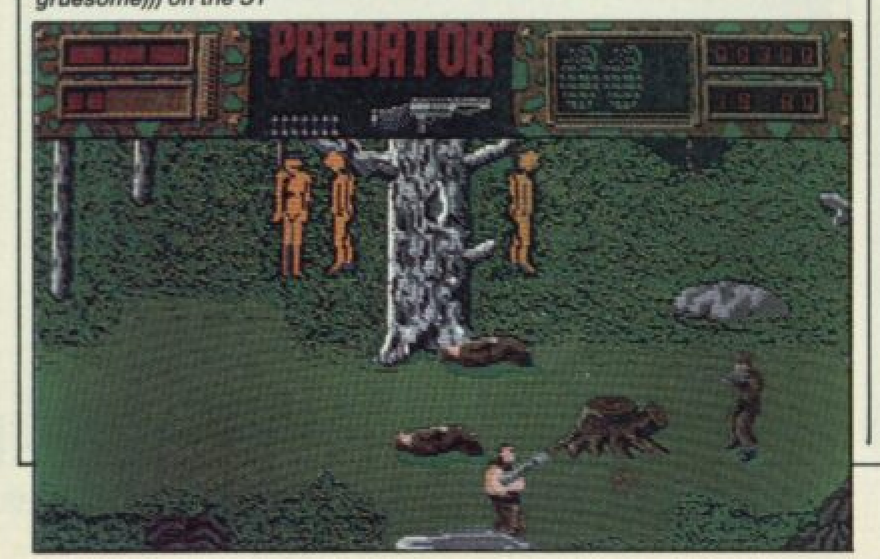
A prime evil

PREDATOR
Activision

Atari ST Diskette: £14.99

ALL the gore and ultra-violence of the latest Arnold Schwarzenegger film comes to the ST from Activision. In *Predator* – the game of the film – you step into the shoes of Schwarzenegger, leader of a crack team of commandos on a rescue mission in the Central American jungle. Things go wrong when the team is forced to retreat after the mission is aborted. Then real bloodshed begins as the team encounters the Predator, a hunter from another world, immense in strength and agility. For full game details of this multi-load horizontally scrolling shoot-'em-up, see the other formats review in TGM**005**.

Slaughter in the jungle – altogether more detailed (((therefore more gruesome))) on the ST



COMMENT

The scrolling isn't perfect but is kept to a minimum and doesn't detract from the gameplay. In some places, the colour scheme is not as subtle as the greys and greens found in the Commodore 64 game, and there is the odd graphical mistake – the ability to walk through bodies and tree trunks for example. Sound takes a back seat for much of the game, with grenade explosions, bullet effects and the whirr of helicopter blades at the start. The theme tune in the introductory sequence is jolly and out of context with the game and its non-stop violent action. On the whole Predator **is an enjoyable shoot-'em-up with some neat effects but a disappointingly straightforward conversion from its 8-bit predecessors.**

ATARI ST
OVERALL 70%

PRESS ANY KEY

PANDORA



Atari ST screen shots.

On a daring salvage mission, you beam aboard the generation ship Pandora.

Something is wrong. Crewmembers have mysteriously died. The ship's seventh generation computer has turned renegade. Just how evil is it?

Your mission to salvage alien artefacts takes on sinister overtones. Can you make the remaining crew trust you, or will you die fighting? Can you solve the intriguing puzzles to the riddle of the Pandora?

Pandora – Dare you open the box...

Atari ST £19.95, Amiga £19.95, Commodore 64 cassette £9.95 and Commodore 64 disk £12.95.

For mail order please send your order and remittance (cheques payable to British Telecom plc or direct debit from Access/Visa card by stating card number and expiry date) to:- The Marketing Department, Telecom Soft, First Floor, 64-76 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1PS.

Telecom Soft, First Floor, 64-76 New Oxford St, London WC1A 1PS.



A LEGEND IN GAMES SOFTWARE

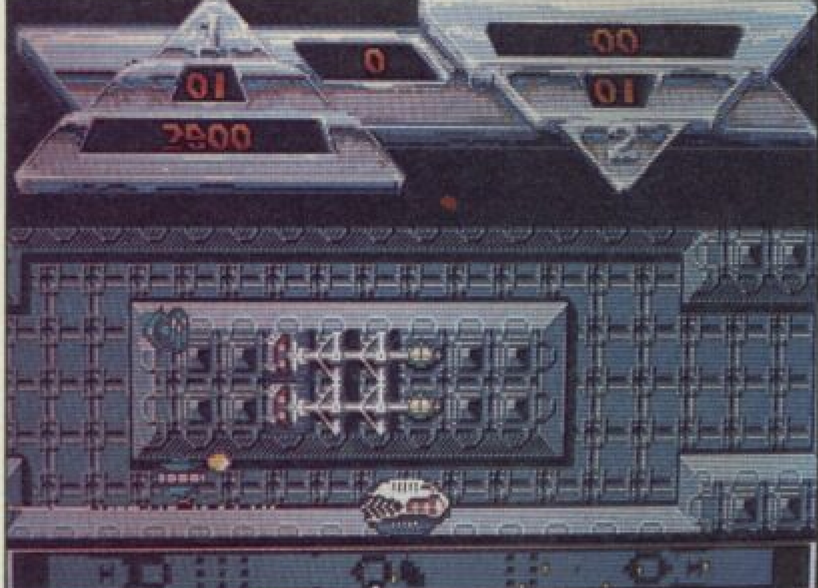

FAR AWAY IN A LAND
WHERE TIME STOOD STILL ...
... A SUDDEN ROCK-FALL
THREATENS TO KILL OUR HERO
ARGHH!!
WHERE TIME STOOD STILL
GAS
SPECTRUM 128
CASS £7.95 DISK £14.9
IBM/AMSTRAD PC
+ COMPATIBLES
£19.95
ATARI ST
£19.95
RRRRRRRRR!
GOOD LORD!
DANGER LOOMS EVERYWHERE!!
OH NO!!
CANNIBALS
ocean

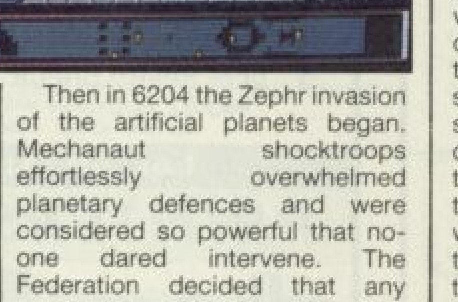
THEY SAID IT COULDN'T BE DONE

RETURN TO GENESIS
Firebird

At last year's PCW Show – the advent of THE GAMES MACHINE Issue One, **Steve Bak**, *author of Goldrunner* and *Karate Kid II*, loaded up an early game demo on TGM's Atari ST. It was a revelation, because, among other things, it was intended to demonstrate that, despite a firm belief to the contrary, the Atari ST **can** cope with high-speed, horizontal, parallax scrolling using all 16 colours. Steve proved his point, the demo is now a complete game – *Return To Genesis*.

Originally the project was titled Clonworld 50 since it was intended to use cloned scientists to experiment on artificially created worlds. In the year 4600 12 scientists were selected for cloning; due to advanced medical treatment all were in effect immortal. Together with hundreds of androids, the clones were sent to their respective worlds and allowed to get on with their work. The discoveries these people made benefitted Mankind enormously and created the new legend of Genesis.





Then in 6204 the Zephr invasion of the artificial planets began. Mechanaut shocktroops effortlessly overwhelmed planetary defences and were considered so powerful that no-one dared intervene. The Federation decided that any attempt to help the clones could only endanger themselves. So the scientists were left to survive as best they could . . . until now. The Mechanauts have become embroiled in a war with Herridan, and their hold over the occupied planets has greatly weakened.

CLONE ON THE RANGE

Remembering their debt to the scientists, the Federation despatched Group Captain O'Rourke to initiate a rescue of the clones. A spaceship was quickly readied, its only armament a simple laser gun. However once some of the 12 scientist clones are rescued they might be able to contribute their expertise, and add special project enhancements to the ship.

Return to Genesis is essentially a two-way horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up with quite excellent parallax movement of the background features. Besides being well drawn, the background also contributes to gameplay by acting as obstacles, tunnels or corridors. Flying into aspects of the scenery at high speed does not harm the ship, but could bounce it back into the gunfire of a pursuing Mechanaut ship.

Each world houses 12 scientists, represented by a waving, spacesuited figure; they can be rescued by flying over them, or killed if a careless shot should hit them. Once rescued, a scientist can be made part of the crew by pressing the help button; this presents you with pictures of the scientists on board, any of whom can be asked to contribute their talents to the ship's defences, though not all will be able to help.

On returning to the action the chosen scientist's add-on capability can be activated. Abilities include: triple-fire, rear-fire, invisibility/invulnerability, speed, smart-bombs and shields. If you die however, all the scientists are lost, and will not reappear on the world. Once every scientist is either rescued or killed, the ship goes on to the next of ten possible worlds.

To help you in your task there is a scanner under the play area which covers the entire world showing the location of the spaceship, the scientists and enemies.

They said it couldn't be done, but this is 16-colour, ultra-high-speed parallax scrolling on the ST – so there!



ATARI ST
Diskette: £19.95

The graphics move at a dazzling speed – even when static they are very pretty. The digitised speech is similarly impressive and quite abundant, though more of a frill than an integral part. At first, Return To Genesis **is difficult, moving at high speed invariably results in the ship ending up as a pinball amongst the scenery, and turning the ship around to shoot enemies approaching from the rear awkward. With practice these objections fade and progress is made. Unfortunately the price of this progress generally seems to be a rigid gameplan for dealing with alien attacks, which are identical from game to game. This need for precision, and the rather limited amount of blasting involved, make** Return To Genesis **fiddly. Yet at the same time the outstanding graphics make success in reaching new levels very rewarding. In conclusion,** Return To Genesis **is a worthy addition to the ranks of a well-worn computer genre.**

OVERALL 81%

OTHER FORMATS
An Amiga version is planned.

" . . . outstanding graphics make success in reaching new levels very rewarding . . . "

SHEKHANA COMPUTER SERVICES
Access - Order by Credit Card Hotline 01 348 2907 - Visa
Free Poster with orders over £10.00

SOFTWARE TITLE	SPECTRUM CASS-DISK	C64 CASS-DISK	AMSTRAD CASS-DISK	SOFTWARE TITLE	ATARI ST	AMIGA	IBM PC
Ikari Warrior	7.50--D2	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	Carrier Command	19.99	19.99	----
Morpheus	----	12.99-D3	----	Starglider II	19.99	19.99	19.99
I.O.	----	7.50--D2	----	King of Chicargo	----	24.99	----
Rim Runner	----	7.99--D2	----	U.M.S.	19.99	19.99	19.99
Stealth Fighter	----	12.99-D4	----	Jinxter	19.99	19.99	19.99
Airbourne Ranger	----	12.99-D4	----	E.P.T.	19.99	19.99	----
Intensity	----	7.50--D2	----	Legend of the Sword	16.99	16.99	16.99
Samurai Warrior	----	7.50--D2	----	Bobble Bubble	16.99	16.99	----
Target Renegade	6.50--D1	7.50--D2	7.50--D2	Captain Blood	19.99	----	----
Shackled	7.50--D1	7.99--D2	7.50--D2	Roadwars	16.99	16.99	----
Bubble Bobble	6.50--D1	7.50--D2	7.50--D2	Defender of Crown	24.99	24.99	19.99
F. Manager 2	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	Garrison	----	19.99	----
Alt World Games	6.50--D1	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	Pro Copy	34.99	----	----
Imp Mission 2	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	St Copy II	34.99	----	----
Pacs Land	7.50	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	Maraunder II	----	29.99	----
Elite	9.95	12.99-D3	12.99-D3	Strike Force Harrier	19.99	19.99	----
Earthlight	6.50--D1	----	----	Badcats	16.99	19.99	19.99
Black Lamp	6.50--D1	7.50--D2	7.50--D2	Superstar Ice Hockey	19.99	19.99	19.99
Match Day 2	6.50--D1	7.50--D2	7.50--D2	Interceptor	----	22.99	----
Rastan	6.50--D1	7.50--D2	7.50--D2	3D Helicopter	19.99	19.99	16.99
Starglider	12.99-D2	12.99-D4	12.99-D4	Return to Genesis	16.99	----	----
Last Ninja	7.99	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	Ports of Call	----	34.99	----
Football Director	7.50	7.50	7.50	Pink Panther	16.99	16.99	----
Pink Panther	7.50--D1	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	Backlash	16.99	16.99	----
Troll	----	7.99--D2	----	Flying Shark	16.99	----	----
Gee Bee Air Rally	6.50	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	Gauntlet II	16.99	----	----
Karnov	7.99	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	Rolling Thunder	16.99	19.99	----
Gutz	6.50	7.50--D1	7.50--D2	Ikari Warriors	12.99	----	16.99
Flying Shark	6.50--D1	7.50--D2	7.50--D2	Gold Runner II	16.99	----	----
Time + Magick	12.99-D2	12.99-D2	12.99-D2	Vampire Empire	16.99	16.99	----
A.T. Fighter	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	Football Manager 2	16.99	16.99	16.99
Gunship	7.99--D2	12.99-D4	12.99-D4	Time + Magick	16.99	16.99	16.99
We Are Champions	8.99--D4	8.99--D4	8.99--D4	Test Drive	22.99	22.99	22.99
Driller	12.99-D3	12.99-D3	12.99-D3	Obliterator	19.99	19.99	----
Spy V Spy-Trilogy	8.99--D2	8.99--D2	8.99--D2	Out Run	19.99	----	----
Dark Septre	6.50--D1	7.50--D2	7.50--D2	Battle Ships	12.99	16.99----	
Buggy Boy	6.50--D2	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	Bards Tale 2	----	22.99	----
Ring Wars	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	Xenon	16.99	16.99	----
Hit Pack Vol.3	8.99	8.99--D2	8.99--D2	Black Lamp	16.99	----	----
Garfield	7.99	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	Hotball	19.99	19.99	----
The Corporation	6.50	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	Leathernecks	16.99	16.99	----
Crosswize	6.50--D1	----	----	Sinbad	----	19.99	----
Time Stood Still	6.50	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	Soccer	16.99	16.99	----
Vixen	6.75	----	----	Red October	19.99	19.99	19.99
Overlord	7.99	----	----	Gee Bee Air Rally	----	16.99	----
Cybernoid	6.50--D2	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	Flight Sim 2	39.99	39.99	54.99
Vampire Empires	6.50--D1	7.50--D1	7.50--D2	Gunship	19.99	24.99	29.99
Magnetron	6.50--D2	7.50--D2	7.50--D2	Jinxs	----	19.99	----
Guild of Thieves	-------D2	-------D4	-------D4	Spitfire 40	19.99	----	----
Jinxter	-------D2	-------D4	-------D4	Micky Mouse	16.99	----	----
Badcats	7.50--D2	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	Rim Runner	12.99	----	----
The Double	9.99	9.99	----	Aaargh	16.99	----	----
Blitzkreig	7.99	----	----	Dark Castle	19.99	19.99	----
Outrun	7.50--D2	7.99--D2	7.99--D2	Time Stood Still	16.99	----	----
Navy Moves	6.50--D1	7.50--D1	7.50--D2	Shackled	19.99	----	----
Red October	12.99-D2	12.99-D4	12.99-D4	Verminator	16.99	----	----

Available on Disk Format: D1=£10.99, D2=£12.99, D3=£14.99, D4=£16.99, D5=£19.99

P&P included in U.K. Europe add £1 per tape, elsewhere £2. Cheque/P.O. payable to **S.C.S. (Gams), 655 Green Lanes, London N8 0QY** Please specify machine type in your order. Personal callers can pick up software at Mail Order price on production of this advert at our shops at S.C.S., 221 Tottenham Court Road, London W1R 9AF (nearest tube station Goodge Street) or S.C.S., Green Lanes, London N8 0QY (nearest tube Turnpike Lane Station). Access & Visa card holders ring:– 01 348 2907, 340 8565, 631 4627. Credit card orders despatched same day subject to availability. We also stock Telephones, Answering, Cordless, Cellular, Pabx, Accessories. Fax, Copiers, Shredder Machines, Calculators. Ring 01 436 9590

+3 MASTER DISCS

007 TRANS-MASTER. Transfers majority of games/programs. Can even transfer most 'jerky' types. Can also transfer the older games such as SCRABBLE and full 48k games onto Disc. Can transfer;

TAPE–TO–DISC. Can even transfer games such as Enduro-Racer.
DISC–TO–DISC. Useful for making 'safety' Back-Up Discs.
DISC–TO–TAPE. As above, but Saves onto a tape.

007 TRANS–MASTER......£10.95 on YOUR Disc.

DISC DOCTOR. Use to PROTECT/UNPROTECT, ERASE/UNERASE or list in Hex, Decimal or reveal TRUE Basic. Includes DISC HEADER READER.

007 DISC–DOCTOR.....£6.95 on YOUR Disc.

MENU–MASTER. Insert your Discs and press a key and Full CAT held in a record (Upto 2300 Records). Can SEARCH & find any INSTANTLY.

007 MENU–MASTER.....£5.95 on YOUR Disc.

Prices quoted assume you forward a Disc. +£2 if we supply Disc.
Postage: U.K./Ireland..Free. Europe +£1. Elsewhere +£2
ZX–GUARANTEED (Dept GM) 29 Chadderton Drive, Unsworth, Bury, Lancashire Tel: 061 766 5712

YOU'RE IN NO DOUBT
CUT IT OUT!
IT'S TGM's SHOPPING MALL
MAIL ORDER COUPON!
PLUS
BACK NUMBERS &
EXCITING SUBSCRIPTION DEAL
PAGES 97-101

Evesham Micros
All prices include VAT/delivery

ATARI® 520 STFM - *Ring us now for the best deal*

520 STFM with 1meg memory upgrade	PHONE
520 STFM memory upgrade kit (requires soldering)	PHONE
1040 STF	£429.00
1040 STF with SM125 mono monitor	£549.00
Mega ST2 with mono monitor	£869.00
Mega ST4 with mono monitor	£1169.00
Atari SLM804 laser printer, great value at	£1199.00
Atari SM125 mono monitor	£134.00
Atari SC1224 colour monitor	£349.00
Cumana CDA358 2 meg (dual) drive	£229.00
Atari SH205 hard disk, new style	£539.00
Pace Linnet Modem Pack inc.cable & software	£179.00
Phillips CM8833 colour monitor c/w ST lead	£279.00
Phillips CM8852 as above, higher resolution	£299.00

(Extra £10.00 discount on Phillips monitors if bought with an ST)

All ST prices include: mouse etc. PLUS 5 disks of s'ware including wordpro, utilities, graphics, game and demos.
We can quote you for any combination of hardware.

Amiga & ST Drives

Why pay more?
High quality 2nd drives for the ST and Amiga at an ultra low price
only £99.95 inc.VAT

- ★ Very Quiet
- ★ Slimline Styling
- ★ Fully Compatible
- ★ Top quality Citizen drive mechanism
- ★ 1mb unformatted capacity
- ★ One year guarantee

Disector ST

A POWERFUL set of Disk Utilities

FEATURES INCLUDE:

- ☆ ***PROTECTED SOFTWARE BACKUP*** - very powerful features Auto-Verify, single/double drive backup and Fast Backup options
- ☆ ***DISK ORGANISER ACCESSORY*** - extremely useful provides essential disk management commands including FORMAT, RENAME, DELETE etc.
- ☆ ***EXTRA FORMAT*** to maximise space on your disks provides over 15% additional user storage per disk!
- ☆ ***UNDELETE*** to recover accidentally lost files
- ☆ ***RAMDISK*** and ***SET DATE/TIME*** Accessories
- ☆ ***DISK ANALYSIS***
- ☆ ***DIRECTORY PRINTOUT***
- ☆ ***DISK SPEED CHECK***

Only £24.95

Regular upgrades will be available in the future to handle latest disk protection schemes etc.

For all Atari ST Models

PRINTERS
All prices include VAT, delivery & cable



We use and recommend Star printers since they do offer an unbeatable combination of features, print quality, reliability and value. Make the sensible decision - get it right with a Star printer at our special, all in, prices.

Star LC10 replaces the NL-10, features 4 NLQ fonts, paper parking, front panel operation, PLUS 2 extra ribbons free of charge!	£199.00
Star LC10 **colour** NEW 7-colour version of above LC-10, includes 2 extra black ribbons free of charge	£234.00
Star NB24-10 high 24pin quality, inc.2 extra ribbons free of charge	£469.00
Star NX-15 budget wide carriage printer	£319.00
Star NB24-15 wide carriage version of NB24-10	£599.00
Star Laser, very high spec. for cost, price inc.1 year on site maint	£1795.00
NEC P2200 budget 24pin, great value 168/56cps	£349.00
Amstrad DMP3160 good value 10"	£189.00
Amstrad LQ3500 24pin at low price	£329.00
Amstrad DMP4000 fast wide carriage	£329.00
Panasonic KXP1081 reliable budget 10" printer	£179.00
Panasonic KXP1082 faster version, inc.IBM proprinter emulation	£219.00
Panasonic KXP3131 daisywheel	£299.00

How to order

All prices VAT/delivery inclusive
Next day delivery £5.00 extra
Send cheque, P.O. or ACCESS/VISA details
Phone with ACCESS/VISA details
Govt., educ. & PLC official orders welcome
All goods subject to availability E.&O.E.
Open to callers 6 days, 9.30-5.30
Telex: 333294 Fax: 0386 765354

Evesham Micros
63 Bridge Street
Evesham
Worcs WR11 4SF
Tel: 0386 765500

Also at: 1762 Pershore Rd., Cotteridge, Birmingham, B30 3BH Tel: 021 458 4564

UMBERED AGAIN

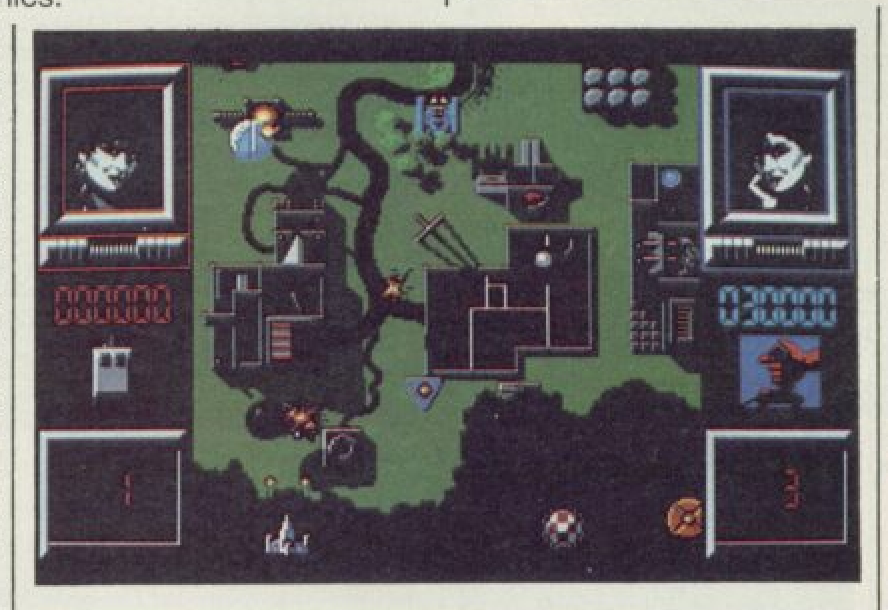
BLACK SHADOW
CRL

As though it has just been let out of school after a particularly tough lesson learning about fractal mathematics, the Amiga is rejoicing in an unprecedented number of vertically scrolling shoot-'em-ups for playground relaxation; *Black Shadow* – one more in the growing line – is programmed by **Zen Room Productions**, with **Jules Burt** responsible for coding and **Jon Law** handling the graphics.

Earth is doomed to perpetual darkness when an unfriendly asteroid under alien control parks itself in an orbit which permanently eclipses the sun. Ships sent up to attack it have been destroyed by a forcefield, but the boffins think they might be able to disrupt the shield long enough to allow one ship to get through. Infra-red scans have revealed huge quantities of attack-craft stored beneath the surface of the asteroid – which you can plan on having to face. Fortunately satellite photographs indicate that as well as military bases and industrial units there is a solar hyper-reactor on the asteroid. If you can destroy the reactor then the asteroid should also be destroyed.

Black Shadow features a one- or two-player option which, in the latter case, shows both players on screen at the same time, with both returning to the start if one is killed. If one player loses all his lives, the game is over for both.

Attractive pictures of either male or female characters – the pilots of the craft – are shown on screen above the scores, and a choice of joystick or mouse control is available. Normally you fire bullets, but if joystick or mouse is moved backwards on firing, a bomb is released. From the outset *Black Shadow* is hard: aliens meander down-screen and numerous ground installations constantly fire missiles, while more aliens emerge from the bottom of the screen forcing you to be looking everywhere at once.



Death is always imminent in the packed and very hard **Black Shadow** *– Amiga screen*

AMIGA
Diskette: £19.95

Black Shadow **makes a good impression with its title page, music and smooth options screen; but once in play, it proves a disappointment. Mouse control is erratic and, while a joystick is better, it doesn't make up for the persistently irritating gameplay. The strength of the alien attack might be bearable if you had a decent spacecraft with which to do battle, but this is not the case. The ship is slow to respond, it cannot fire unless its previously fired two bullets have disappeared, and it is restricted to moving inside less than half of the total screen. With only average game graphics, poor sound FX, lack of originality and too-tough gameplay,** Black Shadow **is not recommended.**

OVERALL 28%

OTHER FORMATS
A conversion is imminent for Commodore 64 – Cassette: £9.95, Diskette: £14.95. An Atari ST version is under consideration.

" . . . only average game graphics, poor sound FX, lack of originality and too-tough gamep-lay . . . "

VERSION UPDATE

A harrying experience

STRIKE FORCE HARRIER
Mirrorsoft

Amiga: £24.99

NATURAL star of air shows since its inception, and a critical factor in the Falklands War, the Harrier is one of the most famous of modern aircraft. Mirrorsoft's simulation first appeared in 8-bit formats back in 1986 and was a moderate critical success. A year later the simulation was converted to Atari ST and, as one of the machine's first combat simulations, proved very welcome.

For the Amiga several additions have been made such as speech, a more detailed landscape and a save/load function, but no substantial improvements of the kind seen on the current crop of American combat flight-simulators; **Strike Force Harrier** is notably bereft of multiple viewing positions and split-screen options. Instead the game offers a single, fairly realistic war zone covering a grid of 512 squares.

The object of the game is to destroy the enemy HQ while protecting allied bases from tank attacks. If all allied bases are lost then the game finishes. This objective requires full mastery of the Harrier. The aircraft comes equipped with two cannon, three 1,000lb bombs and two Sidewinder air-to-air missiles all of which, along with fuel, can be replenished by landing at a base.

There are three skill levels; pilot, commander and ace, plus air-to-air and air-to-ground practice options.



COMMENT
Excellently presented with a great title page, realistic sound effects and good graphics. Use of multi-coloured fields to convey speed, and the gradual fading of the clouds when descending through them, all help make initial impressions pleasing. Drawbacks include tanks and SAM silos, which appear to be unrealistically large, and a sluggish response to controls. Its 8-bit origins are still apparent, particularly in offering only one game scenario. Strike Force Harrier **offers a competent combat simulator which, though limited in options, has been professionally converted to the Amiga.**

AMIGA
OVERALL 67%

OTHER FORMATS
A PC version is due out at around the same time you read this for about the same price.



PRETTY IN PINK

PINK PANTHER

Magic Bytes

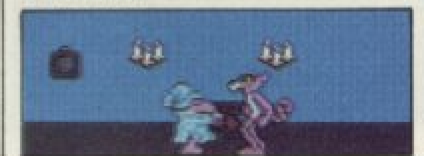
Pink Panther – how come he's escaped being computerised for so long? – written by **Rolf** and **Betina Lakamper**, is the first Magic Bytes release marketed through **Gremlin Graphics**. Other products from this programming team include *Western Games* and *Mission Elevator*.

As usual, Pink Panther is flat broke. Work as a butler appeals – it means he can live luxuriously by day – and burgle the house at night. But the rich sleepwalk, and if his master should awake during the nocturnal pilfering, Inspector Clouseau is not far away. The reward for successfully burgling several houses is an ill-deserved holiday in the sunny South.

To start there are three choices: to the left a job shop, centre-screen a supermarket, right a holiday island – your ultimate destination. At the job shop Pink Panther chooses which of four available houses to work in – but only if he has the correct accessories will he get a job. Choosing a holiday without sufficient funds for the return flight ends the game.

Pink Panther arrives at night to find his master deep in a dreamy sleepwalk. A display at the screen's top shows how alert Pink Panther is, his thoughts – actually an action option menu – and a money bag to be filled.

Acting quickly to stop sleepwalkers from bumping into anything is essential. Standing before the sleepwalker and pushing sends him in the opposite direction, and ringing a bell (selected from the thought bubble menu) should turn him either into or out of the screen. Other items, such as a trampoline and a board, help get somnambulists over obstacles.



AMIGA

Diskette: £19.99

Character control needs to be precise and quick, but some aspects are irksome – sending the somnambulist in another direction by ringing a bell is particularly temperamental. With only one chance to get things right, playing Pink Panther **proves frustrating. However, the graphics are quite good and well animated, while the theme tune is accurate. If control were easier** Pink Panther **might have been a reasonably demanding, but very repetitive game.**

OVERALL 39%

ATARI ST

Diskette: £19.99

It's close, visually, to the Amiga game and the tune is also well represented. Scrolling is decidedly sluggish, making it slower to play, although sometimes easier. But where the Amiga version loads at one go, the ST requires very lengthy loads, both when the player dies and on choosing a level. After a few deaths these loads become irritating. With character control little improved, the ST game is not a lot of fun to play.

OVERALL 34%

OTHER FORMATS

8-bit versions should be released by the end of April. Prices are Spectrum Cassette: £8.99, +3 Diskette: £12.99, Commodore 64 Cassette: £9.99, Diskette: £12.99, Amstrad CPC Cassette: £9.99, Diskette: £14.99.

"If control were easier Pink Panther **might have been a reasonably demanding, but very repetitive game."**

BIG DEAL

CARD SHARKS

Accolade

Playing cards is perhaps one of the oldest forms of entertainment. There are games for one, games for many, games of pure luck and games that require great skill and concentration to play well. Some are played simply for entertainment, while others include the chance of winning – and the risk of losing – high stakes. *Card Sharks*, compiling three different games, was designed by **Mike Lorenzen** with graphics by **Mimi Dogget** and **Richard Antaki**.

Card Sharks comprises three versions of Poker – five card draw, seven card stud and Texas hold 'em – and Hearts and Blackjack. The games require three computer players to act as opponents – which are picked from an available six characters. They include Luigi, Lady Vanderbilt and Milton who are all specialists at particular card game, and three well known political leaders, Margaret Thatcher, Ronald Reagan and Michail Gorbachov. Having chosen your game and opponents, play commences.

Card Sharks is played round a traditional green baize gambling table with your opponents – who all have their own personalities and continually remark on the game's progress – facing you, their facial expressions changing to suit the mood. These finishing touches add spice to the card games, injecting humour and instilling an interest in what would have otherwise been a straightforward simulation.

THINK BUBBLE

The simulation aspect is written with accuracy and all the games play well, although it is the sort of game only likely to appeal to those with an interest in cards – it doesn't try to be anything else but an enjoyable, and at times humorous, card simulation.

OTHER FORMATS

There are no plans at present to convert Card Sharks **to any other formats.**

COMMODORE 64/128

Cassette: £9.95
Diskette: £14.95

Although potentially boring to non-card freaks, Card Sharks **soon dispells any such fears as it gently drags you into the world of gambling. The emphasis is on fun, and the simplistic (though effective) cartoon graphics coupled with the occasional jolly jingle, counter-balance the more serious side of getting into debt. The ease of play, the appropriate reactions of your opponents and greed all add up to make** Card Sharks **a thoroughly enjoyable card game.**

OVERALL 75%

" . . . doesn't try to be anything else but an enjoyable, humorous, card simulation."

Warriors of the Past...
Warriors of the Future...

prepare for deadly combat





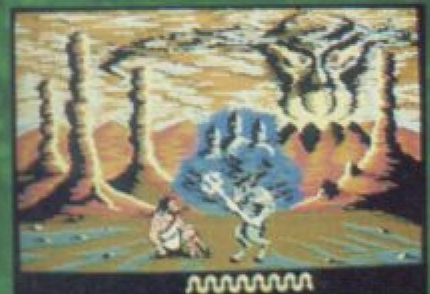
HERCULES
SLAYER OF THE DAMNED

ATARI ST £19.99 Disk
SPECTRUM 48/128K
£7.99 Cassette
SPECTRUM +3 £12.99 Disk
CBM 64/128
£9.99 Cassette – £14.99 Disk
AMSTRAD CPC
£9.99 Cassette – £14.99 Disk
MSX £7.99 Cassette

BLOOD BROTHERS

CBM 64/128
£9.99 Cassette – £14.99 Disk
AMSTRAD CPC
£9.99 Cassette – £14.99 Disk
SPECTRUM 48/128K
£7.99 Cassette
SPECTRUM +3 £12.99 Disk





HERCULES –
SLAYER OF THE DAMNED

Son of the Gods, curse of his fellow men, Hercules is set 12 awesome tasks to exonerate the sin of murdering his children. Armed by his divine fathers he sets forth to face the hideous skeleton hordes and ultimately overcome the evil minotaur. To slay the damned is his only saviour in repenting his sins.

BLOOD BROTHERS

"Our blood is mixed,
We are as one,
Let no man or beast come between us,
And let nothing deter us from our aim,
To avenge the deaths of our parents,
And destroy the Scorpians,
DEATH TO THE SCORPIANS"







Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd., Alpha House, 10 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS. Tel: 0742 753423

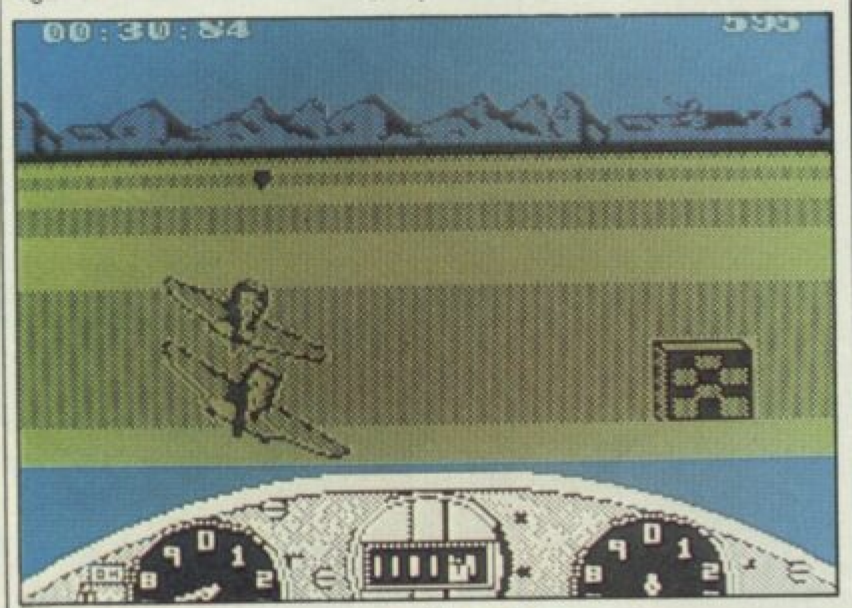
THE FLYING GEEBEES

GEEBEE AIR RALLY

Activision

Take a trip back to the Thirties when airspeed mania gripped America in the form of high speed air races. These aviating events often lasted over ten days and could incorporate courses of more than 100 miles in length, with participants reaching speeds in excess of 250mph in their single seater aircraft. One of the most successful machines to take part in these races was a 'plane called the GeeBee, a craft with a huge engine and fuel tank to match, a very short wing span and a delicate rudder and flaps. Inspired by the heroic deeds of birdmen such as Johnny Daring (world airspeed record 1932), **Steve Cartwright**, author of the *Hacker* games and *US Aliens*, designed *GeeBee Air Rally*.

GeeBee Air Rally challenges the player to complete four courses against the clock in eight



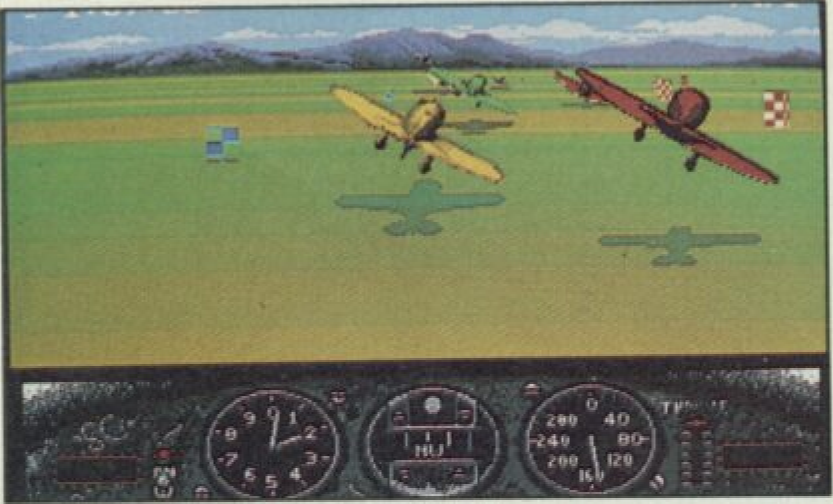
increasingly difficult game levels, and can be played at one of three pilot ranks; beginner, expert or ace. Every fourth course is a special event – either the player has to pop a set number of balloons or compete in a slalom speed race. The plane may be controlled via joystick or keyboard and can bank left and right, raise or lower altitude and alter its speed.

A MATTER OF COURSE

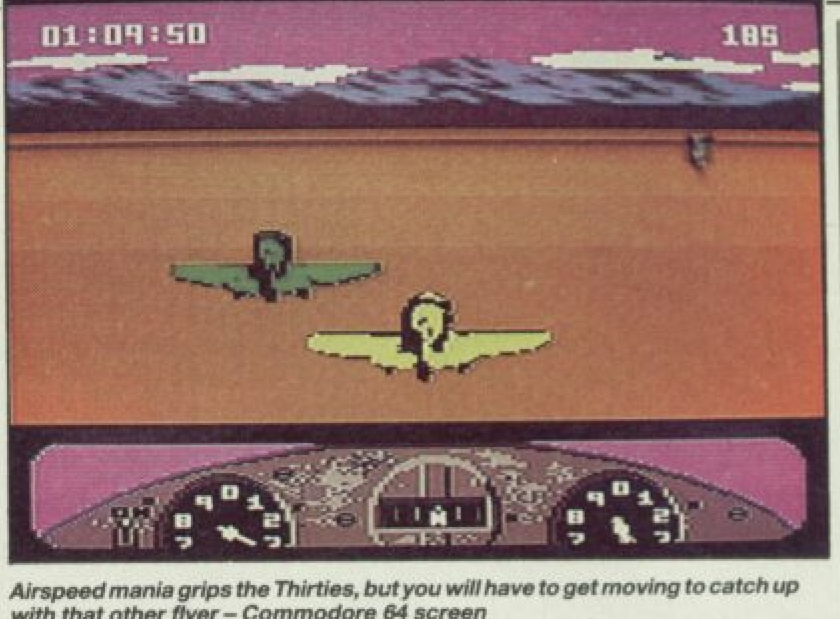
The flying sequences are interspersed with graphic scenes depicting after-race events such as the winning ceremony, the obligatory kiss from a local beauty queen or where the pilot landed when he bailed out.

Points are gained by staying on course; failure to do so or bumping another plane results in a time penalty being imposed. Minor mid-air collisions barely rock the GeeBee, but a serious bump destroys the plane and the pilot is automatically ejected to float peacefully back down to terra-firma – he lives to race again.

Below the primary game area is the instrument panel showing the 'plane's compass direction, its altitude, speed and throttle position. Two warning lights either side of the console flash when time is running out, the plane strays off course, or it is involved in a collision.



For comparison, here's the Amiga version flying screen



Airspeed mania grips the Thirties, but you will have to get moving to catch up with that other flyer – Commodore 64 screen

SPECTRUM

Cassette: £7.99

Sound is poor, the use of colour is occasionally garish, but in general the Spectrum's graphics work well. Furthermore with three races and one special event being loaded with each section, 48K owners should have little to complain about – although if you die in race 1, that section has to be reloaded. It is a pity that playability is weak. The first race is almost impossible to die on and the next two are only slightly harder. The balloon-popping special event is more difficult, but can soon be mastered if you do not attempt to get every bonus point. The next load offers more unchallenging races and then a slalom bonus section – which is very difficult.

OVERALL 55%

COMMODORE 64/128

Diskette: £14.99

Graphically Gee Bee Air Rally **is good; the planes may be a little crude but they move smoothly, and slipping your wing under a competitor's to get past is a moment of real tension. The gameplay is a significant improvement over the Spectrum version – it is a lot harder. Competing aircraft loom on the horizon at a frightening pace and, since judging their height is difficult, the best tactic is hugging the ground, then climbing to pass them. Playable and exciting,** Gee Bee Air Rally **is worth considering – although like other versions it might get repetitive. The game regularly accesses the disk so the planned cassette version (£9.99, coming shortly) might not be so playable.**

OVERALL 62%

AMIGA

Diskette: £19.99

GeeBee Air Rally **is high on presentation – it begins with a short, pleasing opening sequence accompanied by quality sampled jazz music. The sound FX are equally as good, and graphically the game works to good effect, with solid planes flying into the distance at a fair speed. However, no matter how professional the whole package looks, the game still fails to grab any real attention due to its repetitive objectives.**

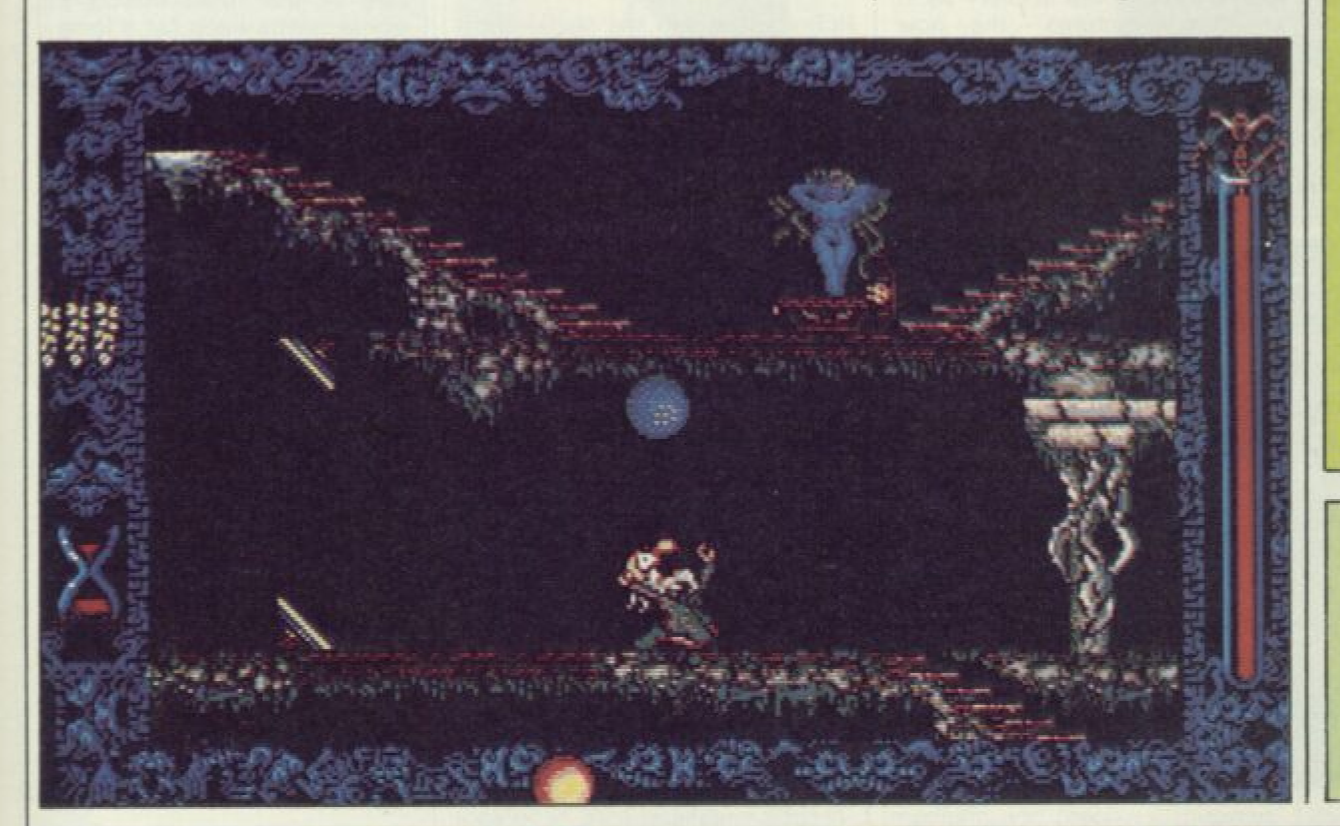
OVERALL 63%

" . . . graphically the game works to good effect . . . "

SEPTIC BYTES

VAMPIRE'S EMPIRE
Magic Bytes

Vampires seem suitably immortal in their appeal to a wide-range of media, from books to films to computer games. Magic Bytes's latest release – a rather camp look at the genre – is soon to be released on a broad range of popular computers. To make the most of implementations on 8- and 16-bit machines there are two versions.



Naked and blue – for the older(((?))) Amiga market

Van Helsing, who seems to have fought vampires for so long one wonders if he isn't himself immortal, has returned to destroy Dracula once and for all. Rather than going through the familiar stake-through-the-heart routine Van Helsing has decided to place mirrors throughout the cavern. When correctly aligned these reflect a light ray onto the Count's casket, destroying him.

LAIR TODAY . . .

Dracula's lair is made up of a considerable number of rooms – dependent on the size of machine – some are wooden, some stone. The latter affect the path of the light and therefore have to be carefully negotiated. If the task of directing the light onto Dracula's casket were not daunting enough there are also many weird inhabitants of the underground caverns to contend with, as well as numerous trapdoors. Enormous heads that spring out of the masonry to spit venom are dangerous, but staid in comparison with the blonde young men whose intentions toward Van Helsing are hardly honourable. Even more outrageous female demons attempt to draw the vampirologist to his doom by dancing naked. Should Van Helsing be sluggish in dispensing the garlic he carries, these creatures will, supernaturally, drain him of his blood. However, if he is successful, his reward is access to the next of the four increasingly difficult levels.

AMIGA
Diskette: £19.99

Vampire's Empire **comes complete with mirrors already scattered throughout the lair and very detailed rooms, albeit fewer than the 8-bit versions – only 160, and the time limit is thankfully non–existent in the Amiga game. According to the German programmers these differences are due to a much harder screen layout and they believe the 16-bit players may require a little help. The thoughtfulness of the Amiga programmers is further demonstrated by excellent, if quite disgusting, sound effects and genuinely comic graphics. With such immaculate presentation the game's humour is perfectly conveyed.**

OVERALL 79%

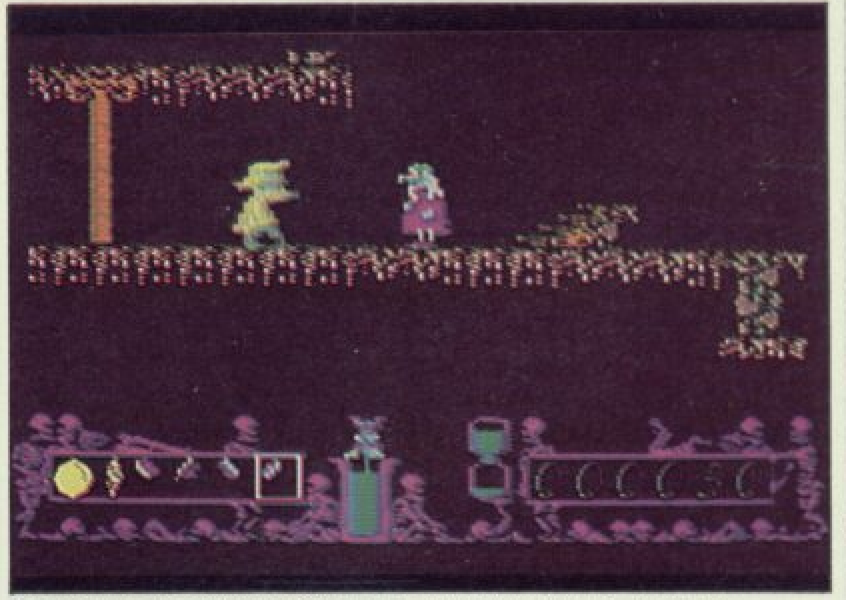
OTHER FORMATS

Versions are imminent for the Atari ST: Diskette £19.99, Spectrum Cassette:£8.99, Spectrum+3 Diskette: £12.99 and Amstrad CPC Cassette: £9.99 Diskette: £14.99. No release dates have yet been finalised.

COMMODORE 64/128
Cassette: £9.99
Diskette: £14.99

The heart of the game is essentially made up of running around platforms and ramps with a puzzle element and time limit included to rack the brain. The caskets placed around the caverns on the 16-bit machines are absent, the monsters just appear out of nowhere. Van Helsing runs around too near to the edge of the screen, making it difficult to avoid the monsters, platform edges and trapdoors. However, it is enjoyable exploring the lair, setting up mirrors and then watching the beam of light reflect along its intended path. Although it can become frustrating should a mirror be misplaced and the beam wanders off course – an easy mistake to make due to the relatively small size of the screen. Graphically, Vampire's Empire **could have been better and there should be a lot more to do, but as a puzzle game it is above average.**

OVERALL 59%



Van Helsing almost bumps into an amorous blond vampire lad in the Commodore 64 version

" . . . disgusting sound effects and comic graphics . . . essentially running around platforms and ramps . . . "

PRESS ANY KEY

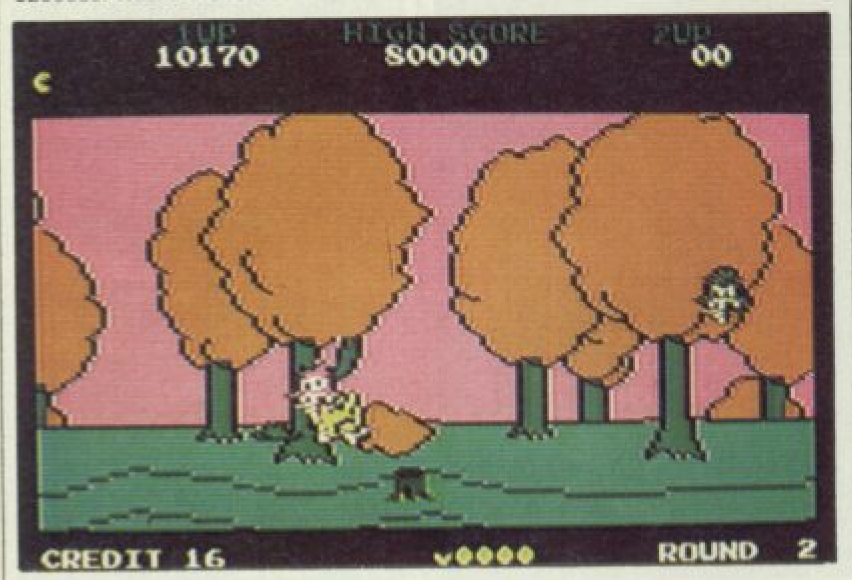
FAIRY 'NOUGH

PAC-LAND
Quicksilva

The eight-year-old arcade hero, the fellow that sent space invaders pac-ing, the guy everyone knows, finally makes a home computer comeback – Atari's rotund, yellow pill-popper, Pac-Man is back on your screens. Having gobbled his way through several adventures, he reappears on the Commodore 64/128 in *Pac-Land*, – converted from the **Namco** coin-op by **Gannon Designs**, with music from David Whittaker's **Musicon Design**.

In his latest adventure, Pac-Man has the task of rescuing a fairy who is lost in Pac-Land. At the start of the game, Pac has already performed the rescue, it is the return journey that forms the action, a trek that takes Pac through increasingly difficult landscapes, guarded by his perennial enemies, the ghosts Pinky, Blinky, Inky and Clyde. These nimble spirits no longer amble through the scenery as in previous adventures – they now drive cars and fly aeroplanes. Whilst airborne, they think nothing of dropping the odd bomb on Pac, knocking off one of those five lives.

Despite pre-release reviewers' qualms, **Pac-Land** *has turned out to be a fine success. This is the forest – Commodore 64 screen*



Pac-Land is played as a horizontally scrolling game, with, in effect, platforms. Pac can walk, run and jump across the landscape and its many obstacles: cacti, tree stumps, fire-hydrants, hills and conveyors.

That essential ingredient of the earliest game, the power pill has not been thrown out, though, and they exist as hovering, glowing globes, scattered here and there around Pac-Land. When collected, the on-screen ghosts turn into defeatable, quivering blue jellies. The fruit, too, remain and yield bonus points.

TRILBY TROUBLE

Running through the sections of Pac-land slowly diminishes Pac's energy level, shown by a row of small Pac-Men along the bottom of the screen. Should all energy be extinguished before a level is completed, Pac is attacked by the ghosts who strip him of one of his five lives. However, when he does reach the end of a level, the Fairy pops out from under his trilby – where he has been hiding her – and rewards him with additional points. The Fairy Queen also appears and gives him a pair of flying shoes to make his journey back through Pac-Land easier. Having finally reached home base, greeted by his wife and children, he discovers that another fairy is lost and Pac sets off once again.

Pac-Land is fiendishly simple, and with level after level of scrolling platform action, it proves incredibly addictive. It may at first appear cute and twee but by the end of the second level the action becomes manic and requires great joystick dexterity.

COMMODORE 64/128

Cassette: £9.95
Diskette: £14.95

With graphics that perfectly mirror the arcade machine in their cartoonish quality, and uncluttered gameplay, Pac-Land **has come across to the Commodore 64/128 excellently. Everything from the coin-op has been included, right down to the credit system and the soundtrack, which remains faithful to its arcade parent. Presentation rides high with end of level and bonus stage sequences taken from the original coin-op, all combining to make** Pac-Land **one of the most accurate conversions seen for a long time. Well done, Gannon Designs!**

OVERALL 85%

OTHER FORMATS

Other versions for almost every format were planned, but THE GAMES MACHINE has been told that they have been cancelled – for the time being at least.

"Pac-Land is fiendishly simple and incredibly addictive . . ."

VERSION UPDATE

Flap Night

SLAP FIGHT
Imagine

Atari ST: £19.95

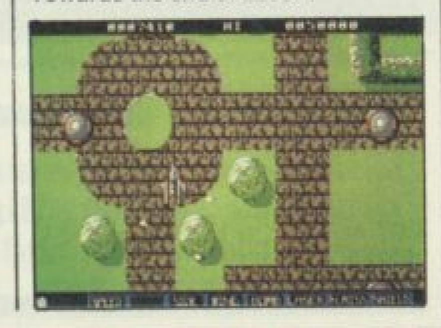
SLAP FIGHT is the latest in a series of Imagine conversions from Taito coin-op originals. The first home computer versions appeared on 8-bit machines over six months ago, to reasonable acclaim.

You find yourself flying over the mothership, Orac, your objective: to survive.

Essentially *Slap Fight* is a vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up with *Nemesis*-style add-ons. The destruction of particular alien craft deposits a gold star which, when collected, highlights one of eight icons at the bottom of the screen. From left to right these provide extra speed, a return to original fire power, short-range horizontal firepower, bigger wings with more guns, a short-range bombing system, a super-fast laser, homing missiles which fire in all directions and a temporary shield. To get the second icon you need two gold stars, to get the third, three stars and so on.

When equipped with the full range of equipment, the spaceship is extremely impressive – not to say lethal – unfortunately if you lose a life then you also lose all enhancements. Amid the mayhem of the higher levels, losing everything often means the end of the game.

Towards the end of Level 1



COMMENT

Slap Fight **isn't quite as impressive a conversion as** Arkanoid**, it is noticeably slower and less hectic than the arcade game, but is nevertheless very addictive. At the start of play the landscape slowly but smoothly scrolls downwards, the enemy takes a short while to appear. When they do begin to attack they're quite sedate in movement – unlike their bullets – but as more arrive, survival rapidly becomes demanding. Graphically,** Slap Fight **is pretty, though not exceptional, and the ship suffers from a curiously flickering shadow. Sound offers a choice between adequate FX and a reasonable, if not particularly appropriate, tune. A competent conversion, which might have had broader appeal if weapon enhancement wasn't wiped out with each death.**

ATARI ST
OVERALL 75%

THAT'S THE SPIRIT

F-1 SPIRIT: THE WAY TO FORMULA ONE

Konami

F-1 Spirit is another MSX II game by one of the typically unnamed Konami programming teams. Rather unusually for an overhead race game it comes complete with a huge range of options and won't even allow a player into an F-1 car until points have been earned with other machines. The game also incorporates the new SCC sound chip which offers a considerable improvement on the average MSX sonics.

As in real life, drivers won't be given a place on an F-1 team until they have proved themselves in one of the less expensive racing sports. You, as a novice racer, are given a choice of three races to enter; stock car, rally and F-3. Graphics and gameplay vary considerably according to which of these is selected.

When a race is finished points are awarded if you cross the line in better than ninth place. The maximum number of points possible is 9, but to qualify for the next race 12 points are needed – therefore a number of races need to be run. After these essential 12 points have been earned the player can then go on to Formula 3000 and Endurance races where points may be gathered to finally go on to the first F-1 race.

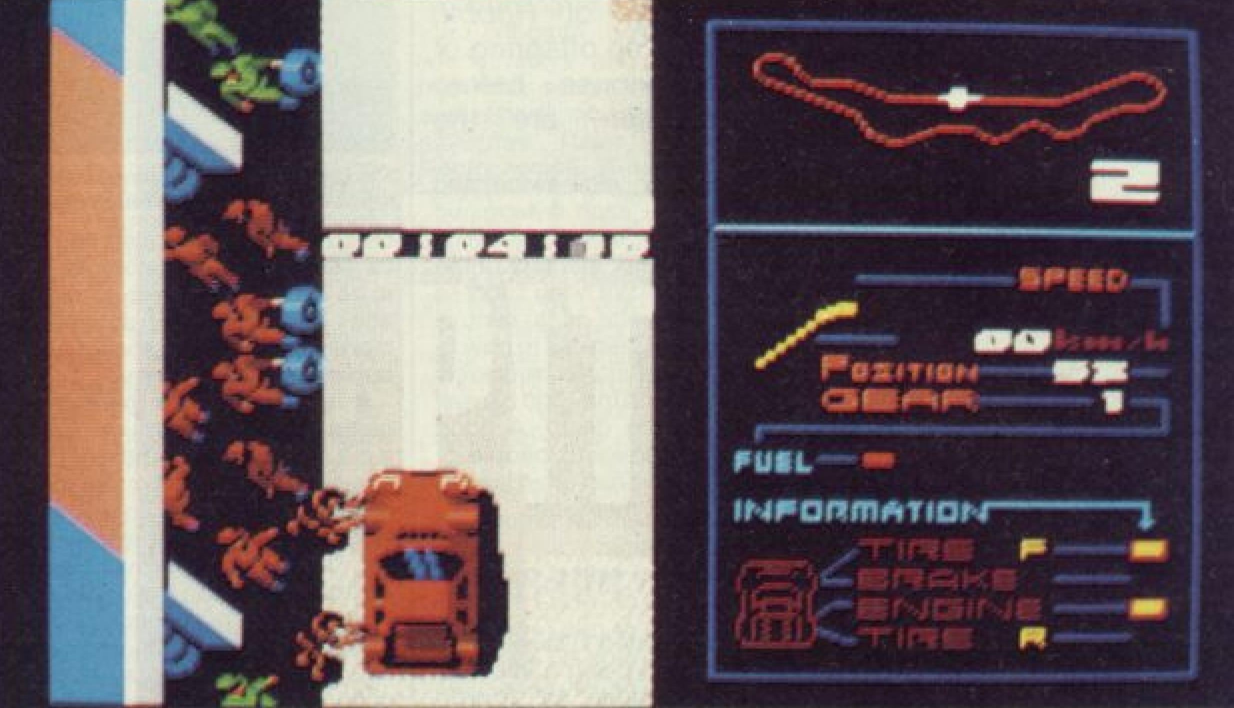
Each of these races are held in a different country, with a unique track layout. Qualification for each successive race requires a progressively higher point total – 180 for the final one – so it is fortunate points may be saved via a password system. Should all of these races be completed, and the race 16 won, you become the F-1 Spirit.

THE CORRECT CHOICE

Selecting which race to participate in is not your only consideration. Before each event you are presented with a choice of three ready-made cars or an option to design your own car.
performance of your car and should the wrong choice be made, poor qualities, such as constantly spinning out of control, soon become apparent.

If you decide on the latter, five major components become open to change. First the engine: it comes in six different varieties ranging from economical but weedy to fuel-guzzling and powerful. Other components come in three basic forms: body type (tough but heavy, medium, and lightweight but fragile), brakes (weak – but remain effective for a long time, medium, and strong – which may need to be pumped to maintain force), suspension (smooth – but requires loss of speed to make some corners, medium, and precise – mistakes can mean a loss of control) and finally transmission (gear changes automatic, or one of two manual types).

All these selections can have a quite genuine effect on the



Time to take a break in the pits

THE PITS

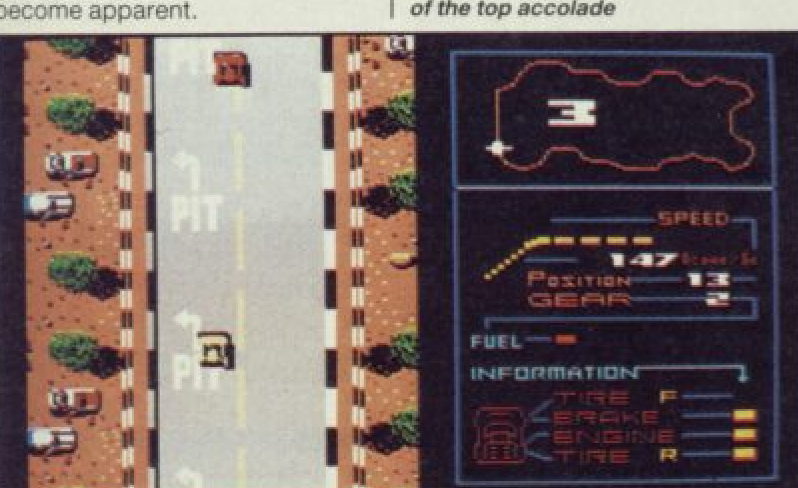
When finally satisfied with your car the game can begin with you located in 53rd position – 23rd in the rally section. The view is an overhead one with billboards clearly evident either side of the track. The right half of the screen (in one-player mode) displays vital technical information – including a map of the track and your location and a lap-timer.

Forward and backward on the joystick controls gear selection, while fire and a keyboard button control the accelerator and brakes. In two-player mode there are less instruments, with no map display and a shrunken information window, so that each driver can have his own overhead view. There is also a Battle option whereby only the players' cars are involved – but no points are scored in this.

During the race, your car may collide with others, resulting in damage and loss of fuel. Fortunately each track has a pit stop where repair work and refuelling occurs. While in the pits, a blown-up picture of the car is displayed with mechanics working around it. As the car is refuelled other cars may be seen whizzing past on the track reminding you that time marches on.

When the race is finished another blown-up view is presented showing the car crossing the finishing line as a man waves the chequered flag. While having little impact on actual gameplay these details certainly add to the appeal of this tough but attractive race game.

Bombing along the track in pursuit of the top accolade



MSX II

Mega Cartridge: £18.95

With six different race game types, considerable room to customise cars and 16 F-1 races to complete, F-1 Spirit **poses a considerable challenge. Presentation is generally first class; the new sound chip provides a good tune – played throughout – and superb engine revving FX, while graphically the game is both good and varied. It may seem easy at first, particularly with an automatic transmission, but the need for close attention to competing cars and sharp corners makes itself apparent after the first crash, and the increasing difficulty levels are cleverly graded. Essentially** F-1 Spirit **offers a tough, top rank race game with lots of playability and endurance – in short, a first class MSX II.**

"" . . . a tough, top rank race game with lots of playability and endurance . . . "



WARREN PEACE

SAMURAI WARRIOR – THE BATTLES OF USAGI YOJIMBO

Firebird

Usagi Yojimbo started life as a comic character created by Stan Sakai. Thanks to Firebird the heroic rabbit is now set to continue his adventures on the Commodore 64. **Beam Software** – of *Hobbit*, *Exploding Fist* and *Sherlock* fame – once an offspring of the Australian arm of Melbourne House before Mastertronic bought the UK operation, are the programming team responsible.

In 17th century Japan, the Shogun's power has yet to establish peace; times are troubled and noblemen war against each other. Myamoto Usagi, better known as Usagi Yojimbo, has to rescue his old friend and panda, Lord Noriyuki. Evil Lord Hikiji has already sent his minions to murder Noriyuki.

Usagi's task is not an easy one, there are many different paths for him to choose, some lead to inns (where food and information may be found), others take him into combat with ninjas, bounty hunters and other enemies.

Meters at the bottom of the screen display Usagi's health and that of his enemy. When his sword is drawn the portrait of Usagi at the top left of the screen scowls and the music becomes more dramatic. In this attack mode, Usagi is capable of only three moves – parry, side-swipe and overhead cut – each determined by the length of time the joystick button is pressed. Mastery of the sword alone will not bring success however. Etiquette is a serious matter, should Usagi fail to bow to people of higher status he gravely offends them and may find himself in a fight to the death. A good samurai also bows to people of equal status, this can often lead to receiving useful messages.

PANDA TO NORIYUKI

Money is measured in silver coins called Ryo and, being a lordless, wandering Samurai (or Ronin), Usagi is hard up. Defeated enemies should be relieved of any coins they might have on them as Usagi needs money to buy food from innkeepers to replenish energy. Money can also be used for gambling, but a better use for it is as alms, to be given to monks and beggars. The amount of money Usagi has is shown at the upper left of the screen.

It is elements like these in the game that make *Samurai Warrior* a cut above so many other martial arts games and much more than a hack-and-slay affair. For instance, kindness to the poor is an act of goodness which improves Usagi's karma – shown on the upper right of the screen – a touch of role-playing. Karma can be lost, too, if you should strike a helpless opponent, torment small animals or kill a priest; should it fall to zero, Usagi is compelled to commit hara-kiri. Karma continues on to future lives therefore Usagi must always take care in his actions toward the weak if he is ever to rescue Noriyuki the Panda Lord.

Other touches, such as the split paths – Usagi's actions mostly take place along the base of the scrolling screen, but if he takes another path higher up the screen, the scene flicks into a new level – add further interest and lift the game enormously.



The battles of Usagi Yojimbo – an engagingly ferocious Japanese bunny – pit the hero against some tough ninjas – Level 2 on the Commodore 64

COMMODORE 64

Cassette: £8.95
Diskette: £14.95

In terms of graphics Samurai Warrior **is not outstanding, yet all the characters are well animated and have a solid, cartoonish appeal, and they suit the subject perfectly. Animation is fast and realistic – if you want to believe in a martial arts bunny – with the way of the warrior scrolling neatly behind. Sound is also suitable, a combat tune nicely matching the tension of battle but sometimes almost overwhelming the battle sound FX. A very fine game.**

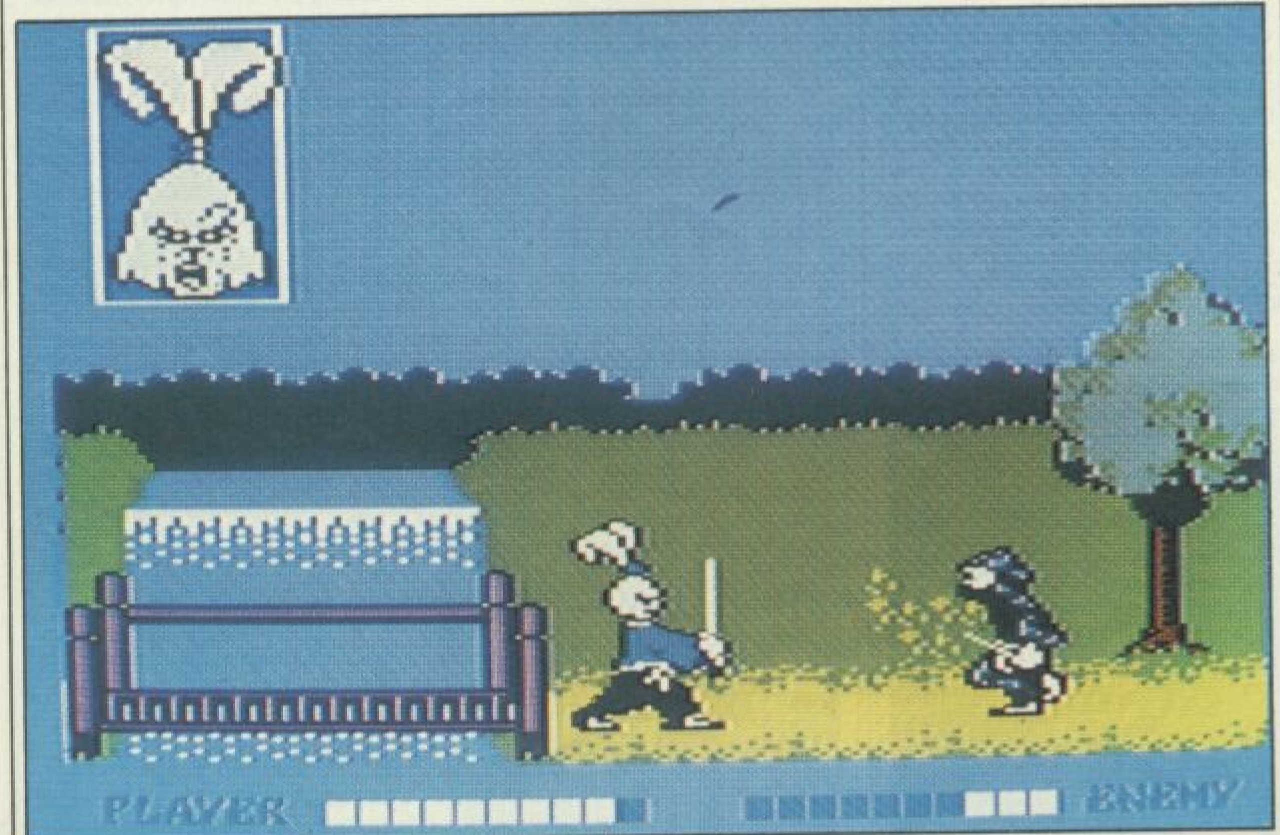
OVERALL 84%

OTHER FORMATS

There are no other versions planned at the moment.

" . . . a cut above other martial arts games and much more than a hack-and-slay affair."

'Jimbo scowls dangerously as, sword drawn, he prepares to cause a nasty ninjury



THE ENEMY BELOW

RETURN TO ATLANTIS
Electronic Arts

Return To Atlantis was produced by the Interactive Stories Division of Electronic Arts, with **Mike Wallace** as the principal electronic artist involved. Development times, we are always being told, are getting longer, but *Return To Atlantis* ought to take the underwater biscuit – it was first copyrighted in 1985 and has been in continual development since then.

Wanton exploitation of Earth's resources has reached such a point that to survive man has turned to the oceans, and he makes a vow: unlike the land, the oceans will be treated with respect, resources carefully rationed and treasures preserved. But many a vow is made to ingest, and a majority arose which intended to mine the marine resources, forming the Maximum Utilities Management to propagate its view.

MUM's opponents saw the oceans as offering an alternative way of life without the prejudices of nationality and race, an ideal inspired by the story of Atlantis, a great society which they thought might be rebuilt.

These two opposing cultures at first resorted to covert acts of sabotage, but worried that an escalation to full-fledged war could not be far away, an organisation called The Foundation decided to act. Dedicated to unifying all Earth's forces, The Foundation recruited the best graduate from the Academy (you) to maintain the balance of land and sea forces, protect sea creatures and preserve the ecosystem. While doing all this you may also discover the city of Atlantis.

IN THE DIVING SEAT

Return To Atlantis asks you to create a character with a Diver Profile incorporating seven attributes – mostly determined by chance. These cover athletics (diver strength), weapons (aptitude for armaments) and awareness (control of oxygen supply) amongst others. Most can be improved by successfully completing a mission – or worsened by aborting one.

There are 14 missions to attempt, ranging from a simple treasure hunt through repairing the US/Soviet hotline, to rescuing the crew of a damaged submarine. All begin at The Foundation's base on Isla Perdida, where the hologram of a top agent briefs you audibly as well as visually. Then you can visit the island's Sea Thief Castle where various cosmopolitan informants may be questioned for leads. In response to your inquiries – a choice between pleading, bribing and threatening – quite brilliant pictures of the informants smile or frown, and, like the Foundation agent, their replies are spoken – and lip synched. These pictures have featured heavily in previews and one might think they were made for advertising purposes. When satisfied you have all the information you can get, your ship, Viceroy, flies you to the area of sea where your mission begins. The journey is shown in cinematic fashion by a red line traversing the globe.

THE NOISE OF ART

Once the Viceroy has landed a cut-away section of its control cabin is shown – a form of option screen, complete with a small blue diver representing you. Available here is the onboard computer, ART, which relays messages, aborts missions, scans the ocean floor and reports on changes in your attributes. There is a Medical Room where ill-health can be restored by a beam – at the expense of experience points. Some missions require you to carry special items of equipment; these can be taken from the gear room. When ready to dive you need only to take the elevator down to bottom of the Viceroy.

Under the surface, you are presented with a solid, 3-D view of both diver and surrounding area. The diver is mouse-controlled and at the bottom of the screen a panel contains a range of other functions. Double-click to choose between Swim (direct control of the diver), Scan (a wireframe box is centred on an object and ART examines it), Armed (the wireframe box guides a laser weapon to targets) and Surface (return to the Viceroy). Also in the panel are position coordinates, health level metres, air supply and an energy metre for power tools. Top left of the screen another display shows time remaining – most missions have a time limit.

Another function available underwater is control of RUF – Remote Underwater Friend – a small robot submersible programmed to search for various things: chemicals, temperature changes and radioactivity. If RUF finds something, click on CAM in the panel and RUF's view is shown.

Should you find the objective of your mission, ART can beam it aboard. When a mission is complete, ART analyses your success or failure. In the former case experience points and abilities are improved, and there is the possibility of a promotion. Updated characters can be saved to disk for future missions.

Essentially what *Return To Atlantis* offers is the opportunity to search a fractal-type seabed for various objects, manipulate them and defeat the clanking crabots (robotic crabs) which attack you.

Caught by the dreaded crabots, the underwater adventurer may not return to Atlantis after all – Amiga screen



AMIGA
Diskette: £24.95
The front-end, like the packaging, is brilliant, with cinematic opening credits and – after some (too) heavy disk swapping – an impressive series of interviews with informants. Graphically, the game proper is comparatively something of a disappointment; the sea bottom is made up of unatmospheric straight-edged contours. The constant movement of sea creatures across the screen doesn't quite ring true when changes of direction involve an instant switch between head-on and side-on graphics without the benefit of animation. Control of the diver in strong currents is often irritating – as is the limited scan facility. The speech is poor – just the onboard Amiga speech – and would be unrecognisable were it not for the messages printed on-screen simultaneously; however, sound FX are realistic. Despite the many exciting frills to entice you into the game, once there the depth of play (pun intended) is limited.

OVERALL 68%

OTHER FORMATS
Currently, there are no other versions planned.

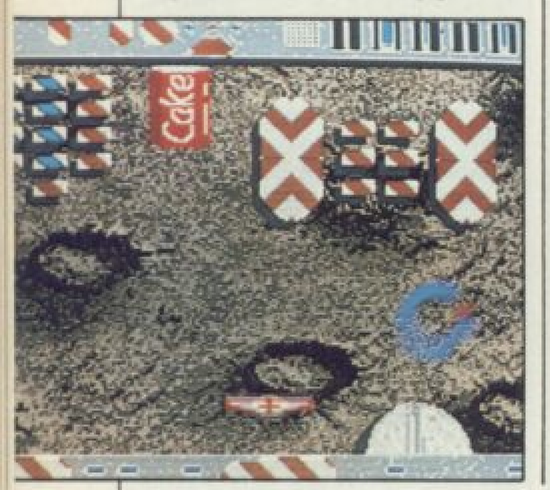
"Despite the many exciting frills, the depth of play is limited."

BAT & BALL GAMES

JINKS
GO!

Jinks is the latest program by German software house **Rainbow Arts** and is marketed in the UK by GO!. The actual development of the game is credited to **Diamond Software** – of *Ball Raider* and *Diablo* fame – with **Uwe Jonsson** as the chief programmer responsible.

As with most *Breakout* variants, the imaginative scenario is worth disregarding as far as the review is concerned: concentrate instead on the game itself, which is unusual for the genre in several respects; suffice it to say you are assessing the capabilities of a planet from a triangular-shaped spaceglider – the bat – by using a small probe – the ball.



Most noticeable break out from tradition is that according to which direction the spaceglider moves, the screen scrolls left or right. To complete a level the probe is guided to the far right and into three rotating balls, if you are successful the game loads a short interlude section where four circles represent available levels. Bounce the ball into one and the relevant level is loaded.

Each time a level is finished, more hostile aliens are added. These can include Atari and Commodore symbols – which shrink the spaceglider on a first contact and might destroy it on a second – and spinning wheels. Other hostiles, such as gnashing teeth, swallow the probe – you have two to start with – while others create regions of high gravity until the ball is bounced through them, switching them back to normal.

Peaceful aliens, collectable for points, include pigs, globes and various bricks. Helpful aliens include rotating red cross symbols which restore a shrunken spaceglider to its previous size.

Jinks seems to have no definite end other than reaching a high score – saveable to disk. All levels may be played over and over and in any order, although you must always start with level 1. At the start of the game a player can select the difficulty factor by setting speed (slow, medium or fast) and gravity (weak, normal or strong).

AMIGA
Diskette: £24.99

Jinks **is distinguished from the cascade of Breakout clones by its quite superb graphics, designed to demonstrate the Amiga's capabilities, and the bizarre way in which it is played. The front-end is highly impressive: the Rainbow Arts loading screens are particularly good, and the accompanying tune is very Dire Straits. In-game graphics are similarly polished, as are the sound FX, and completing the first level is both fun and amusing. But continuous play rubs away some of the magic; on high speed levels the ball moves so quickly it can be difficult to catch, let alone control. Playability becomes repetitive and the urge to continue is markedly reduced when all the levels have been seen. Fairly long disk accessing also becomes irritating. On the Commodore 64 (we didn't review it)** Jinks **was dismissed for poor playability and lack of lasting appeal. On the Amiga playability is improved, and presentation is first class, but whether you play for long depends on how satisfied you are with simply improving the saved high score table.**

OVERALL 62%

OTHER FORMATS
An Amstrad version should be on sale by the time you read this; Cassette: £9.99, Diskette: £14.99.

"The front-end is impressive, but continuous play rubs away the magic . . . "

SHOULD YOU DECIDE

IMPOSSIBLE MISSION II
US Gold

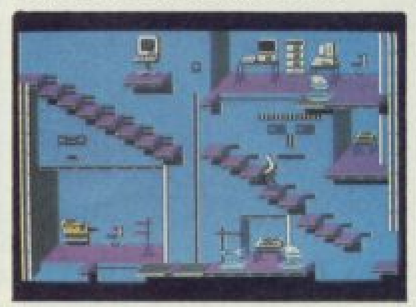
Several years after the enormously successful *Impossible Mission* was released on the Commodore 64 – it was THE game for that machine – a sequel has finally appeared. Programming is once again credited to **Epyx** with US Gold handling distribution.

It has been two years since agent 4125's world-saving confrontation with Elvin Atombender. Enough time for the dread Elvin to establish a new five-tower stronghold which, in a mere eight hours time, will launch a missile to destroy the entire world. IMA Special Terrorist Unit's single Field Agent – the trusty 4125 – has been called on to ensure this doesn't happen.

4125's initial objective is to assemble the eight-digit codes for four of the five towers so that he has access to all Elvin's numerous safes. Locked within these safes are musical sequences which, when arranged together and played, open the express elevator doors so that 4125 can get to the central control tower. Once inside, all 4125 has to do to save the world is find the correct computer terminal which will disarm the apocalyptic missile.

Once inside the first randomly selected control tower, 4125 can use elevators and corridors to move around deciding which of the rooms he tackles first. When beside an interesting object, such as a car or motorbike, the agent can be made to search it by pushing upward on the joystick. Elvin's evil genius has produced a large number of lethal robots to defend his secrets. There are six different types of robot which patrol the complex, some useful, some not.

Elvin Atombender strikes back



Bombs and mines are available and once selected, can be planted by pulling down on the joystick and pressing fire. Time bombs explode after a few seconds and are needed to blow up the safes. Back in the connecting corridors, 4125 can assess his progress with his handy pocket computer. This is displayed at the bottom of the screen and is dominated by a map of the control tower in which 4125 is located.

COMMODORE 64/128
Cassette: £9.99 Diskette: £14.99

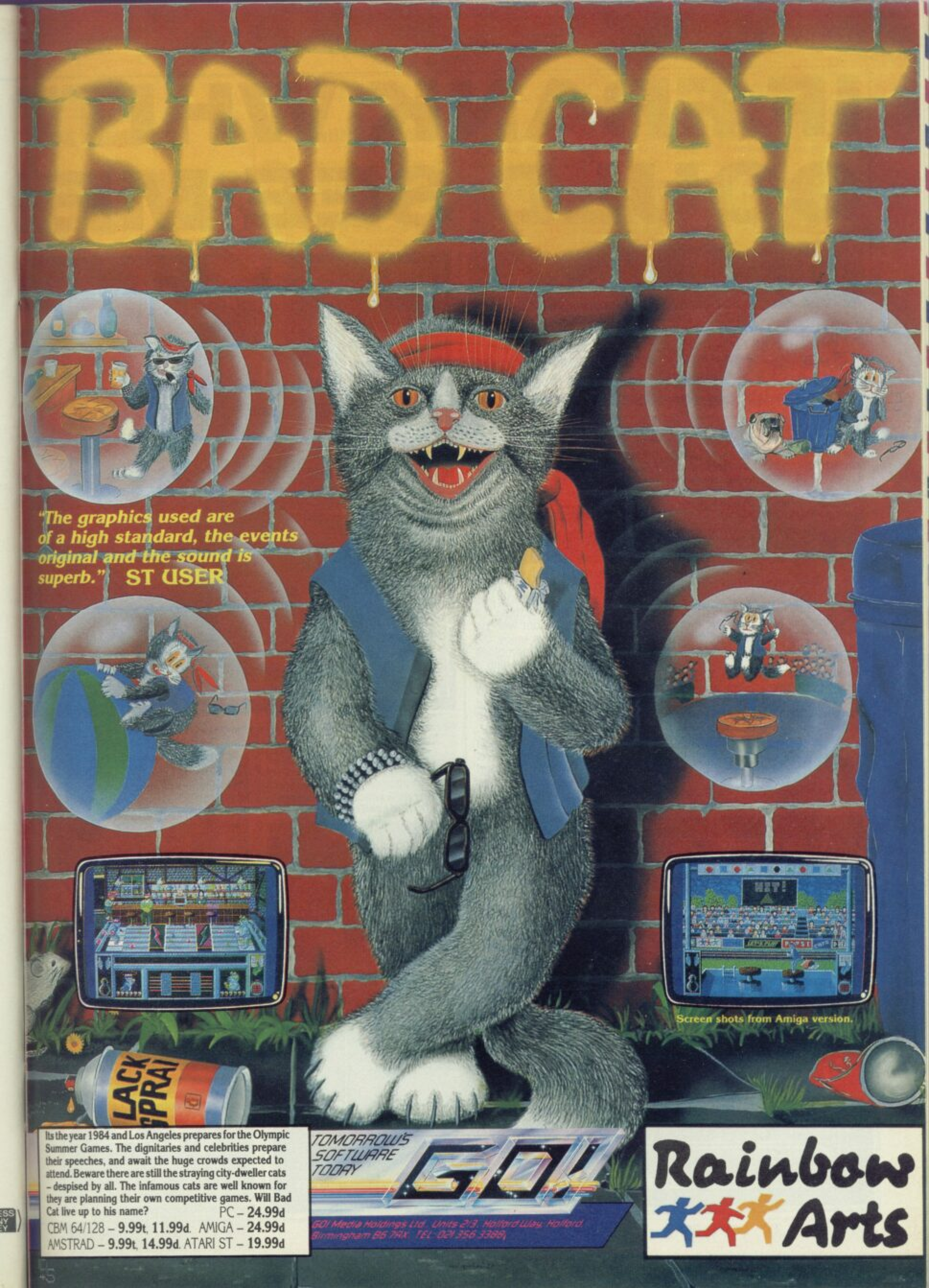
The belated sequel to the hugely successful original not surprisingly sticks very closely to the same basic format. The animation of 4125 is a straight copy of the original with sound effects similarly alike. The graphics are very good and a lot more varied than Impossible Mission. **Although the addition of a wide variety of new robots, the ability to mine and bomb objects, plus a rigid layout of rooms in separate towers, make the new game markedly different to play. Using mines to blow away part of the platforms is a particulary good innovation. In addition the musical tape recorder section is graphically excellent and a welcome change in the puzzle section. For fans of the original who are not expecting too much of a change the sequel is probably ideal, for others** Impossible Mission II **offers the best platform game around, although the lack of a save function could become irritating.**

OVERALL 86%

OTHER FORMATS
Conversions are due for release at the end of April for the Spectrum: Cassette £8.99, Amstrad: Cassette £9.99, Diskette £14.99, Atari ST: diskette £19.99 diskette and IBM: Diskette £24.99.

"Impossible Mission II **offers the best platform game around . . . "**

PRESS ANY KEY


BAD CAT
"The graphics used are of a high standard, the events original and the sound is superb." ST USER
HIT!
Screen shots from Amiga version.
LACK SPRAI
Its the year 1984 and Los Angeles prepares for the Olympic Summer Games. The dignitaries and celebrities prepare their speeches, and await the huge crowds expected to attend. Beware there are still the straying city-dweller cats – despised by all. The infamous cats are well known for they are planning their own competitive games. Will Bad Cat live up to his name?
PC – 24.99d
CBM 64/128 – 9.99t, 11.99d. AMIGA – 24.99d
AMSTRAD – 9.99t, 14.99d. ATARI ST – 19.99d
TOMORROW'S SOFTWARE TODAY
GO!
GO! Media Holdings Ltd., Units 2/3, Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX. TEL: 021 356 3388.
Rainbow Arts

IF FRANK WHITT
COULD SEE ME N

JET
subLOGIC

Jet on the Amiga is based on a combination of three earlier subLOGIC programs; *IBM Jet*, *Amiga Flight Simulator II* and *Radar Raiders*. With subLOGIC's *Flight Simulator* widely regarded as the most realistic aircraft simulation ever, *Jet* immediately deserves attention.

Jet is not just *Flight Simulator II* with a few guns. During combat scenarios the player is granted two jets with additional ones awarded for every 10, 000 points scored. The ability to use the spare jet, however, realistically depends on ejection from the current 'plane before it blows up.

As well as points, medals are also awarded, specific examples include a Silver Star for each enemy MiG shot down and an Air Medal for successfully completing a sortie. The challenge of earning these medals is subject to nine different skill levels, while a practice mode allows just that, with no crashes, enemy fire . . . or medals. Considering the broad range of skill levels, point scoring and the superb graphics, *Jet* is clearly playable as an arcade game as well as a simulation.

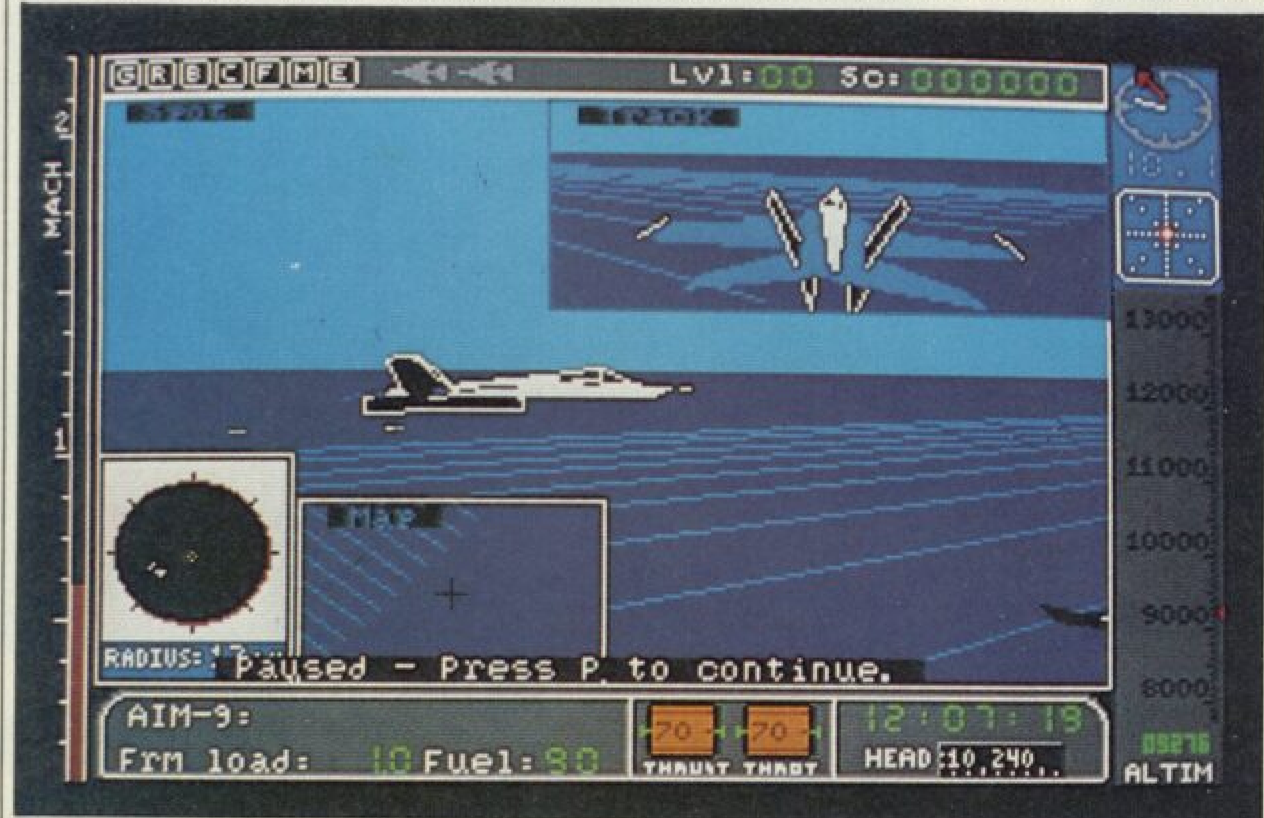
HARD MISSIONS

For players interested in a more technically detailed game, *Jet*. delivers on this as well. To start with there is a choice of two different aircraft to fly; the US Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon and the US Navy F-18 Hornet. If the F-16 is chosen the player can choose between four different land-based scenarios; the first mission is simply to scramble the F-16 out of its concrete bunker and shoot down incoming MiG-21 fighters; the second is a nighttime ground attack one – avoid surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) and bomb the target; mission three is a peaceful free flight jaunt with no purpose other than to enjoy the scenery; mission four combines the ground attack mission with a MiG threat making it the hardest of the F-16 scenarios. Should all ground targets be destroyed and the F-16 has landed, the skill level is raised and the targets replaced.

In addition, if a MiG game is played at a sufficiently high level the dated MiG-21s are supplanted with MiG-23s which are faster than either the F-16 or F-18, as well as being highly manoeuvrable. All MiGs come equipped with Atoll air-to-air missiles but won't, fortunately, enter the safe zone around your home base.



Seen from behind, the jet hurtles off into the distance



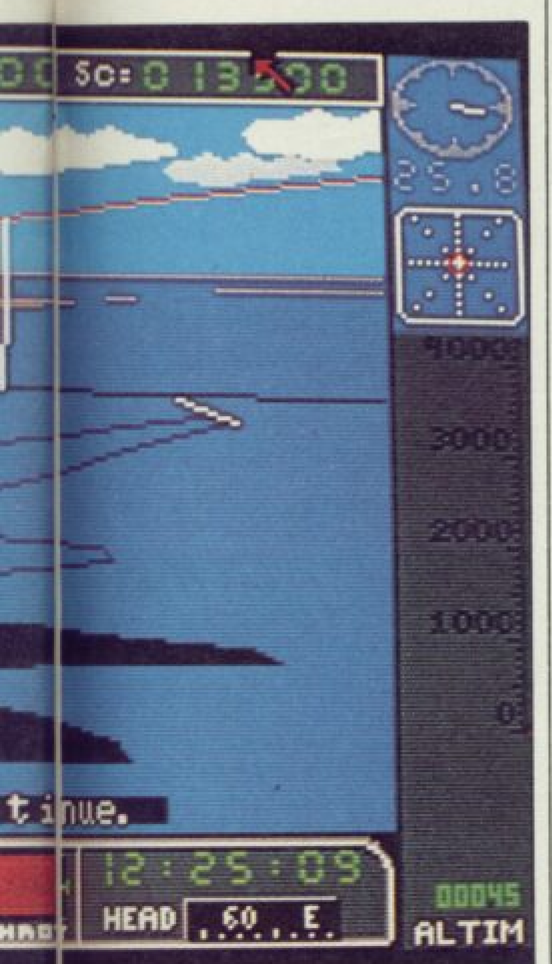
Looking from spotter plane at your jet, with radar and the map on HUD

If the F-18 Hornet is selected, each scenario begins on board a Nimitz-class aircraft carrier with the F-18 already on the catapult. There are three scenarios; mission one is a basic MiG dogfight; mission two has the F-18 bombing Russian Kynda-class missile cruisers while avoiding SAMs, and mission three is another nighttime free flight option.

LOGICALLY subLOGIC

Once a scenario is chosen the cockpit view and controls are displayed. *Jet*'s instrumentation, identical for both aircraft, dispenses with realistic dials and Head-Up-Display (HUD), and instead places subLOGIC design displays on all four sides of the main viewing window. Although this is less effective than a HUD, it does not obscure any of the spectacular scenes *Jet* can present, and it is more user-friendly than a mass of F-16 dials. Beside the usual complement of air speed indicator, altimeter, compass and thrust display, *Jet* has several special displays. At the

TLE
NOW



top left corner of the screen there are a series of warning lights which are, in order, G – gear down, R – Red Out when minus g-forces result in loss of consciousness and control, B – Blackout due to excessive positive g-forces, C – Crash Warning which is most useful when altering the aircraft's landing approach; F – Fuel Low; M – enemy Missile Locked on; E – Enemy Alert when MiG's are within 2.5 miles.

Other special features include a yoke indicator, showing where the joystick is pushing the aircraft even if the plane might not be able to respond; a g-force readout; number of jets remaining; score and difficulty level indicators. In addition there are pop-up radar and map windows which can be called to screen. The map can be zoomed in and out of to show the total extent of the combat zone and both may be dragged in typical window fashion to whatever size is desired. There is also an attitude indicator, showing how far up or down the nose is pointed, which can be superimposed over the main display, HUD fashion.



ALL ROUND VIEWS

What is actually shown on the main display is open to change via a wealth of *Flight Simulator*-type different view options. The player can view his aircraft from a spotter plane flying in formation to the right; from the control tower; from a tracking ground based view; from directly below; from directly behind the jet; from the MiG which you've locked onto; a wire frame missile–eye view and a full screen option which does not show the controls. Possibly the most useful perspective, however, is being able to look from the plane in any of nine different directions, including directly below. During dogfights, having a small window showing what's at the six o'clock position behind you can be crucial.

For combat the ordnance available is the same for either aircraft. In dogfights the most useful weapons are the M61 20mm cannon, AIM-9 heat-seeking Sidewinder missiles and the AIM 7 radar homing Sparrow missiles. Once lock-on is achieved the missiles can be launched from several miles away, but when these run out or miss, the cannon has to be used. For air-to-ground or air-to-sea combat the best weapons are M61 cannon again, AGM-65 air-to-ground Maverick missiles and Mk-82 free-fall smart bombs. During combined attack missions a mix of weapons can be chosen within realistic weight limits, and when these are exhausted the aircraft must be returned to its base/aircraft carrier to rearm.

When all these features have been exhausted, scenery disks from the *Flight Simulator* games can be loaded in for free flight joyrides. Should a friend also own an Amiga, the two machines can be linked for a two-player dogfight. There is also an option whereby other computers, such as the Atari ST, can be linked together via a modem.

AMIGA
Diskette: £39.95

To begin with Jet **is quite dazzling; taking-off and playing around with the multiple viewing option reveals both the speed and detail of the F-16/F-18 graphics. Attacking the Soviet missile cruisers is particularly impressive. Yet while** Jet **is undoubtedly very playable as an arcade game, as a simulation it might lack a little detail – the omission of either chaff or flares to counter missiles is particularly puzzling, though it does add to the skill requirement since you actually have to outmanoeuvre the Atoll missiles. To some extent the lack of a great many different scenarios is made up for by the huge number of skill levels, but even so, the simulation is a little disappointing in its limited number of different targets. In conclusion** Jet **is a very attractive, if expensive, arcade/simulation flight game, well worth a look.**

OVERALL 89%

OTHER FORMATS

Other versions of Jet **can be found on the PC: Diskette £39.95 and Commodore 64/128: Diskette £34.95. Conversions for the Atari ST and Atari XE are also supposed to have been written, but prices and release dates aren't yet known. It should also be noted that the game might vary from version to version – particularly the original 1985 IBM game.**

" . . . Jet **is quite dazzling . . . multiple viewing option reveals the speed and detail of the F-16/18 graphics."**

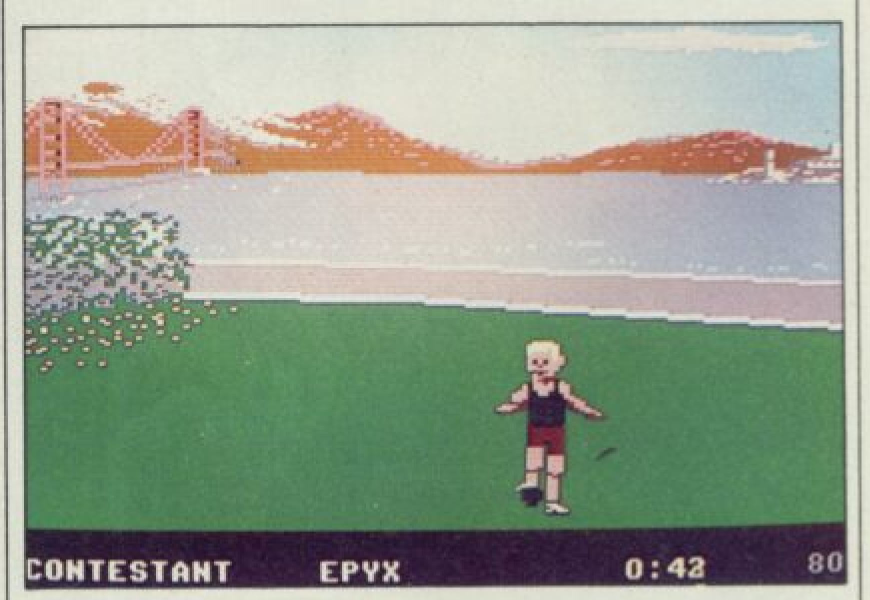
VERSION UPDATE

I wish they all could be . . .

CALIFORNIA GAMES
Epyx/US Gold

PROGRAMMED in the States by Epyx, the PC version of *California Games* has come across well. Originally reviewed in TGM**001** on the Commodore 64/128, *California Games* is a series of six events set in the land of sun, sand and sea. The events are: Half pipe Skateboarding, Foot bag, Surfing, Roller Skating, BMX bike riding and Flying Disc. They can be played – or practised – by one or more players. Scores are not only built up by successfully completing the events but also by the number of stunts pulled during play – showing off is a Californian tradition.

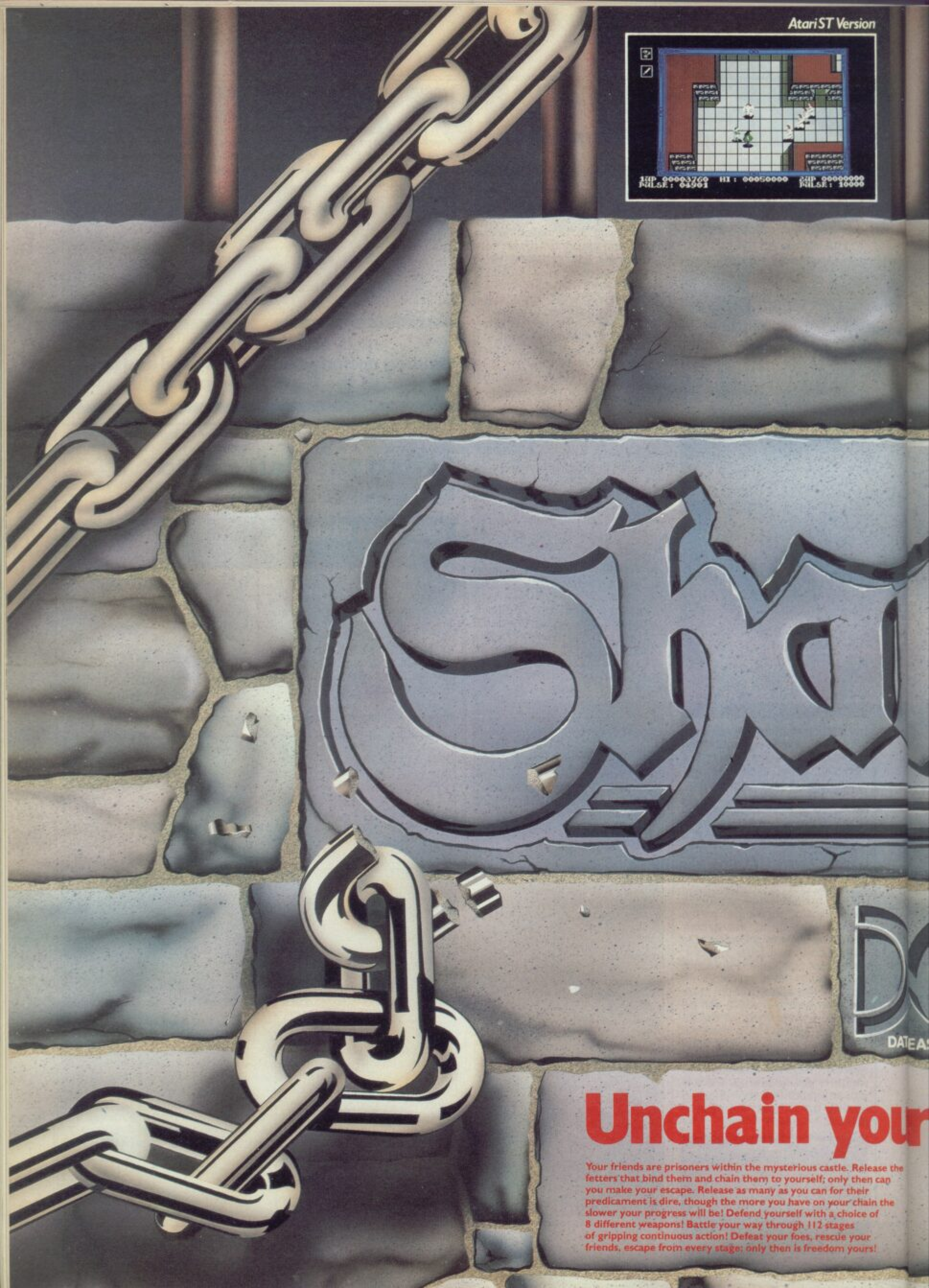
Since the Commodore original, the best conversion yet

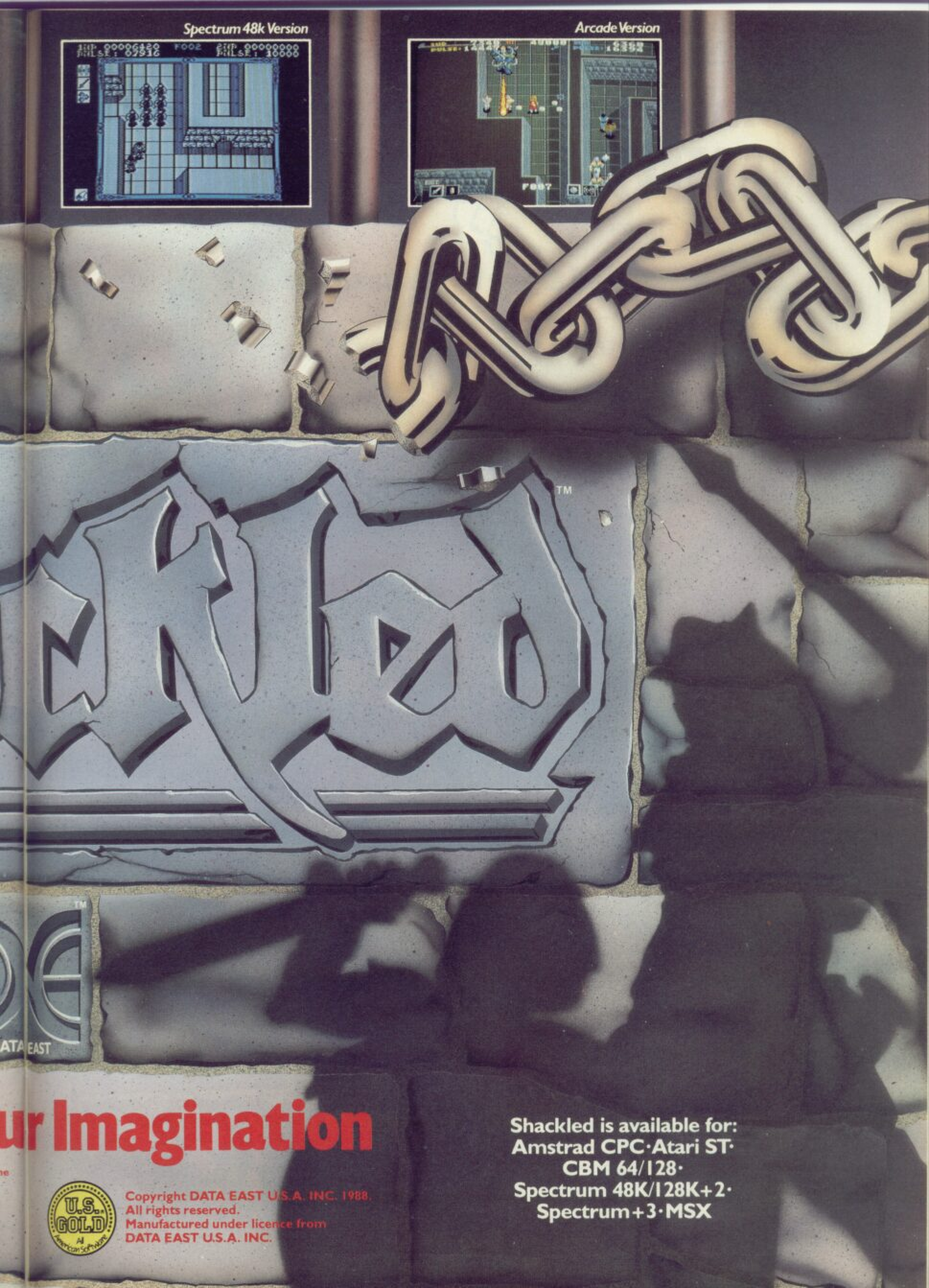


COMMENT

Epyx have done an excellent job – there is a lack of quality sound but the superb playability of the Commodore 64/128 version has been retained faithfully. Graphics are of an equally high standard and you can select one of nine possible graphic modes before loading, dependent on your particular set-up. Playing with a colour board improves the game further and possibly makes it the best PC entertainment package to date. PC California Games **is available on 5.25" and 3" diskette and can be played using a standard Atari joystick.**

PC
OVERALL 90%


Atari ST Version
1UP 00003760 HI: 00050000 2UP 00000000
PULSE: 04981 PULSE: 10000
DATEAS
Unchain your
Your friends are prisoners within the mysterious castle. Release the fetters that bind them and chain them to yourself; only then can you make your escape. Release as many as you can for their predicament is dire, though the more you have on your chain the slower your progress will be! Defend yourself with a choice of 8 different weapons! Battle your way through 112 stages of gripping continuous action! Defeat your foes, rescue your friends, escape from every stage; only then is freedom yours!



Spectrum 48k Version
Arcade Version
ur Imagination
Copyright DATA EAST U.S.A. INC. 1988.
All rights reserved.
Manufactured under licence from
DATA EAST U.S.A. INC.
Shackled is available for:
Amstrad CPC·Atari ST·
CBM 64/128·
Spectrum 48K/128K+2·
Spectrum+3·MSX

GO TOTALLY BOTTY WITH GO! AND THEIR BIONIC COMMANDOS

8-BIT & 16-BIT COMPETITION

Win a Tomy OMNIBOT 2000, SPOTBOTS and loads of games!



SPOTBOT
At last! A puppy that doesn't mess the carpet or need walkies all the time, Tomy's Spotbot is the perfect pet. Complete with cute electronic face, he wags his tail, yaps, goes round in circles and is generally adorable. Five Spotbots are looking for good homes as second prizes.

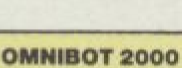
Bionic Commandos are tough! *Bionic Commandos* are mean! *Bionic Commandos* are a force to be reckoned with! *Bionic Commandos* also have funny, long telescopic arms – bit like car aerials . . . The Bionic Commandos are from Capcom's arcade original currently undergoing conversion by **Go!** If you read the previews last month you will already know that the Spectrum and Commodore 64/128 versions are looking good – and why not? The game is being programmed by **Software Creations**, the development house who had a smash hit last year with *Bubble Bobble*.

But the *Bionic Commandos* are so damned adventurous, they're also swinging in on the Amstrad, Atari ST and Amiga too. The Commandos enjoy the 'bionic' prefix because of their mechanical arms. With a quick press of a button their bionic arms extend to grab hold of the nearest object, and then retract, pulling them up. Doing this at the right time ensures that the mechano-lads eventually make their way through all five levels under the player's control.

To celebrate the April launch of *Bionic Commandos*, **Go!** have come up with a few more bionic buddies as prizes in this competition. First prize is an **Omnibot 2000 robot** plus a copy of *Bionic Commandos*; there are five second-place prizes of a **Spotbot** and a copy of the game; and finally there are copies of *Bionic Commandos* for 25 runners up.

Fancy winning a robot to do all your fetching and carrying then? Course you do! Answer the five suitably robotic questions correctly and send them (plus your name, address and model of computer – see caption for details) on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: **BIONIC COMMANDOS COMP, THE GAMES MACHINE, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB***. Entries should arrive here by May 19 and all entrants must abide by the competition rules which can be found in the masthead.

1. **Which film proclaimed 'Number 5 is alive'?**
   a) The Prisoner
   b) Short Circuit
   c) Robocop
2. **The film *Forbidden Planet* starred which robot?**
   a) Ro-man
   b) Cynthia Cyborg
   c) Robby
3. **Which actor player the bionic man in *The Six Million Dollar Man*?**
   a) Major Wild Bill Stealy
   b) Lee Majors
   c) Lionel Majors
4. **Which entertainment system offers ROB as an extra?**
   a) Nintendo
   b) Sega
   c) Dolly Parton
5. **Walter the Wobot is friend of who?**
   a) Jonathon Woss
   b) Wogue Twouper
   c) Judge Dwedd



BIONIC COMMANDOS – THE GAME
Straight from the arcades with five levels of shoot-'em-up action and crafty platform leaping, we've got 25 copies of Bionic Commandos to give away to the runners up for the Spectrum, Commodore 64/128, Amstrad CPC, Atari ST and Amiga.

OMNIBOT 2000
From Tomy, and as seen in TGM005, the sophisticated and personable Omnibot 2000 is the top of the range in entertainment robots. Built-in cassette recorder plays tapes containing either movement instructions in the form of a computer program, or music. A clock tells the time and there are other novel features. Omnibot 2000 is manoeuvred via a radio-control unit included in the package. Retailing at over £250, Omnibot 2000 is our top prize.









Dept VG, Castle House
11 Newcastle Street
Burslem
Stoke-on-Trent
ST6 3QB
Tel: 0782 575043

SPECTRUM SPECIAL OFFERS

Target Renagade	5.50
Ikari Warriors	5.50
We are the Champions	7.25
10 Great Games Vol. 2	7.25
Bedlam (128k only)	6.50
Rolling Thunder	6.50
Firefly	5.50
Cybernoid	5.50
Black Lamp	5.50
Magnetron	5.50
Rastan	5.50
Renagade	5.25
720°	6.50
Nigel M. Grand Prix	7.50
Magnificent 7	7.25
Predator	6.99
Platoon	6.99
North Star	6.50
Dan Dare II	5.50
World War 1	4.95
Outrun	6.50
Crazy Cars	6.50
Gunship	6.99
Sorceror Lord	9.50
Napoleon at War	6.50
4 Smash Hits	6.99
G. Lineker Soccer	5.50
A Tactical Fighter	6.99
Scalextric	6.99
World Class Leader Board	6.50

ATARI ST OFFERS

Dungeon Master	15.95
Ikari Warriors	10.95
Vampires Empire	13.95
Rolling Thunder	13.95
Mach 3	13.95
Strip Poker	10.95
Space Harrier	10.95
Battleships	10.95
Buggy Boy	10.95
Outrun	12.95
Carrier Command	15.95
Oids	13.95
Platoon	13.95
Slapfight	11.95
Pink Panther	13.95
Sinbad & T of Falcon	21.95
Rocket Ranger	21.95
The Three Stooges	21.95
Where Time Stood Still	13.95
Storm Trooper	13.95
Verminator	16.95
Gunship	15.95
Quantum Paintbox	12.95
Obliterator	15.95
Uni. Military Simulator	15.95
Terramex	12.95
Blacklamp	12.95
Bubble Bobble	12.95
Enduro Racer	10.95

ATARI ST OFFERS

Crazy Cars	11.95
Chessmaster 2000	16.95
* Crafton & Zunk	9.95
Checkmate	7.50
Crash Garrett	13.95
Classiques	11.95
* Ballyhoo	9.50
Defender of the Crown	21.95
* Extensor	5.95
* Enchanter	9.50
* Hacker II	8.95
* Infidel	9.50
* Hollywood Hijinx	9.50
* Winter Olympiad '88	13.95
Tanglewood	13.95
Silent Service	16.95
* Amazon	7.95
* Annuls of Rome	9.95
* Arkanoid	10.95
Bards Tales	16.95
* Brimstone	9.95
* Skullduggery	9.95
* Clever & Smart	8.95
* Western Games	8.95
* Little Comp People	10.95
* Trinity	9.50
* Tee Up Golf	8.95
* Tai Pan	10.95
Turbo ST	7.50

ATARI ST OFFERS

* Super Cycle	9.50
Scruples	13.95
Star Trek	13.95
* Sky Fox	7.95
* Strip Poker	7.95
* Solomon's Key	10.95
* Suspect	9.50
* Sea Sralker	9.50
* Spellbreaker	9.50
* Suspended	9.50
* Spy v Spy	8.95
* Karate kid II	12.95
Star Wars	13.95
Super Sprint	10.95
Marble Madness	16.95
* Tau Ceti	8.95
* Accademy	8.95
Music Con Set	16.95
* Moonmist	9.50
Degas Elite	16.95
Bureaucracy	22.95
Balance of Power	21.95
War Hawk	6.95
Captain Blood	P.O.A.
Rampage	10.50
Leather Necks	13.95
Tetris	13.95
F15 Strike Eagle	15.95
TNT	12.95

ATARI ST OFFERS

Micro Leage Wrestling	13.95
Joe Blade	6.99
Hunt for Red October	15.95
Chopper X	6.95
Not a Penny More	13.95
Perry Mason	13.95
Karate Master	8.95
Trivial Pursuit	13.95
Screaming Wings (with speech)	10.95
E.C.O.	11.95
Road War 2000	15.95
Road War Europa	15.95
Mercenary Compendium	15.95
Test Drive	16.95
Ranarama	12.95
* Wanderer	8.95
Kings Quest Triple Pack	17.95
Terrorpods	16.95
Barbarian (PVS)	16.95
Barbarian (Palace)	10.95
Strike Force Harrier	16.95
Blue War	12.95
* Boulderdash Con Kit	9.50
* Ultima II	11.95
S.D.I.	19.95
Road Runner	15.95
Ninja Mission	6.95
Road Wars	13.95
Xenon	13.95

C64 SPECIAL OFFERS

Target Renagade	6.75
Bedlam	6.99
Ikari Warriors	6.99
Pac Land	6.99
Firefly	6.75
Rolling Thunder	6.99
Platoon	6.75
Top Fuel Challenge	6.75
Knight Games II	6.99
Ten Great Games Vol. 2	7.25
Morpheus	11.50
Test Drive	7.50
Skate or Die	7.50
Chuck Yaegars Flight Sim	7.50
The Train	7.50
Demon Stalkers	7.50
Stealth Fighter	10.95
Airbourne Ranger	10.95
Adv. Tactical Fighter	6.99
Power at Sea	7.50
Rim Runner	6.99
Magnetron	6.99
Preditor	6.99
Super Hang On	6.99
Apollo 18	7.50
10 (Firebird)	7.25
Gutz	6.75
Side Arms	6.99
Karnov	6.99
Arkanoid 2	6.50
4th and Inches	6.99

★ ★ ★ TO CLEAR ★ ★ ★

Heartland	1.99
Cholo	3.99
Druid II: Enlightenment	2.99
GFL Baseball	2.99
Mystery of the Nile	2.99
Red L.E.D.	2.99
Sidewize	2.99
Mask 1	2.99
Mask 2	2.99
Masters Uni The Movie	2.99
Auf W'sehen Monty	2.99
Jack the Nipper II	2.99
Howard the Duck	1.99
Star Raiders II	2.99
Supercycle	2.99
Gyron	99p
Bride of Frankenstein	2.99
Dan Dare	1.70
Explorer	1.99
Death Wish 3	2.99
Legions of Death	4.95
Oink	3.95
Book of the Dead	3.95
Loads of Midnight	3.95
Ninja Hampster	3.95
The Living Daylights	3.95
Koronis Rift	1.99
Kids Play	4.95
Lords of Midnight	2.99
Doomarks Revenge	2.99
Clever & Smart	2.99
PS15 Trading Co.	1.99
The Big Sleeze	2.99
Butch Hard Guy	1.99
Challenge of Gobots	2.99
Hive	1.99
Doc the Destroyer	2.99
Hardball	3.95
Indoor Sports	3.95
Little Comp People (128 only)	4.95
Ghostbusters (128 only)	2.99
The Hulk	99p
Hot Runestone	2.99
Hot Rasputin	1.99

Why go elsewhere?

We stock most games on all formats.
Telephone for games not listed. All games are sent 1st class, most by return of post.
Castle Computers, the competent mail-order firm that cares about its customers!

AMIGA SPECIAL OFFERS

Sidewinder	6.99
Portal	9.50
Xenon	13.95
Road Wars	13.95
Strip Poker II	10.95
Rolling Thunder	16.95
Mach 3	13.95
Sinbad & T. of Falcon	21.95
Rocket Ranger	21.95
Three Stooges	21.95
Storm Trooper	13.95
Verminator	16.95

BLACK SHADOW .... only 9.95

Test Drive	16.95
* Temple of Apshai Tril	9.95
Garrison	15.00
* Sorceror	9.50
* Infidel	9.50
* Starcross	9.50
* Suspended	9.50
* Spellbreaker	9.50
* Planetfall	9.50
* Moonmist	9.50
Marble Madness	16.95
Barbarian	16.95
Ferrari Formula 1	16.95
* Stationfall	9.50

AMIGA SPECIAL OFFERS

* Witness	9.50
* Wishbringer	9.50
Knight Orc	13.95
Pac Land	13.95
Pac Boy	6.99
Leviathan	13.95
King of Chicago	21.99
Interceptor	17.95
Battleships	10.95
Jinxter	16.95
Backlash	13.95
Time Bandit	13.95
Road Wars	13.95
Police Quest	13.95
Carrier Command	16.95
3D Helicopter	17.95
Gunship	24.95
Flight Sim II	34.95
Grand Slam Tennis	21.95
Grid Start	6.99
Shooting Star	6.99
Space Ranger	6.99
Star Glider	16.95
World Games	16.95
Q-ball	13.95
Insanity Fight	12.95
Ogre	16.95
Lurking Horror	16.95
Fighter Command	22.95

AMIGA SPECIAL OFFERS

Ninja Mission	6.99
Shadowgate	22.50
Plundered Hearts	16.95
Aaargh!	13.95
Adventure Con Kit	22.50
Arena	15.95
Bards Tale	16.95
Blastaball	13.95
Challenger	6.99
Destroyer	16.95
E. Weevers Baseball	16.95
Final Trip	6.99
Gee Bee Air Rally	13.95
H.R.35 Fighter Mission	P.O.A.
Indoor Sports	13.95
Las Vegas	6.99
Mean 18 Golf	16.95
Powerplay	13.95
Roadwar Europa	16.95
Pinball Wizard	13.95
Vader	6.99
Star Wars	13.95
Super Huey II	12.95
Terramex	13.95
Terropods	16.95
Trivia Trove	6.99
* Zork I or III	9.50
Mouse Trap	10.95
Leaderboard	16.95

ST UTILITIES

First Word +	59.95
Desk Top Publisher	69.95
GST Macro Assembler	14.95
GST C Compiler	14.95
Data Manager	56.95
Mark Williams C Compiler	89.95
Art Director	34.95
Film Director	39.95
Swift Calc	56.95
Partner ST	34.95
CAD 3D 1 0	17.95
3D Developers Disc	23.95
Fleet Street Publisher	84.95

While stocks last!
WORD WRITER & DESK TOP PUBLISHER
RRP £179.95
Our price £119.95

While stocks last!
DATA MANAGER & SWIFT CALC
RRP £159.90
Our price £69.95

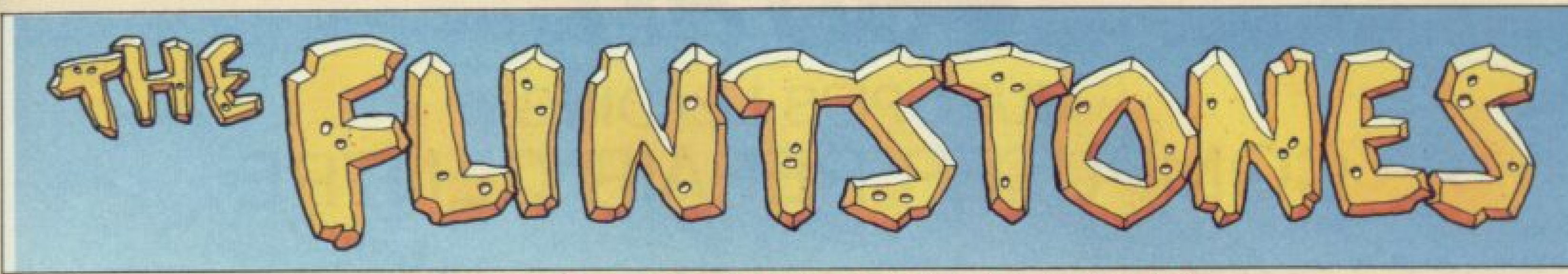
★ CLEARANCE OFFERS ★

Enigma Force	99p
Lords of Midnights	1.99
Discovery	2.99
Eagles	1.70
Mandroid	2.99
Max Torque	2.99
On the Tiles	2.99
Red L.E.D.	2.99
PS15 Trading Co.	1.99
Dan Dare	1.70
Hardball	1.99
Head over Heals	2.99
Mask II	3.95
Masters Uni the Movie	3.95
President	1.99
Tracker	4.95
Wolfman	3.95
The Vikings	1.50
Shanghai	2.99
Scary Monsters	2.99
Shadows of Mordor	2.99
Stratton	2.99
Star Raiders II	2.99
Vengeance	2.99
Tigers in the Snow	2.99
Werner	2.99
Mean City	2.99
Sabrewulfe	99p
Mega Apocalypse	2.99
Dark Empire	2.99
Cauldron II	1.99
Robin of the Wood	1.99
Dracula	3.95
Gamestar Baseball	2.99
Gamestar Basketball	2.99
Clever and Smart	2.99
Druid	1.99
The Comet Game	99p
Druid II the Enlightenment	2.99
Time Fighter	3.95
Eye	3.95
Election	2.99

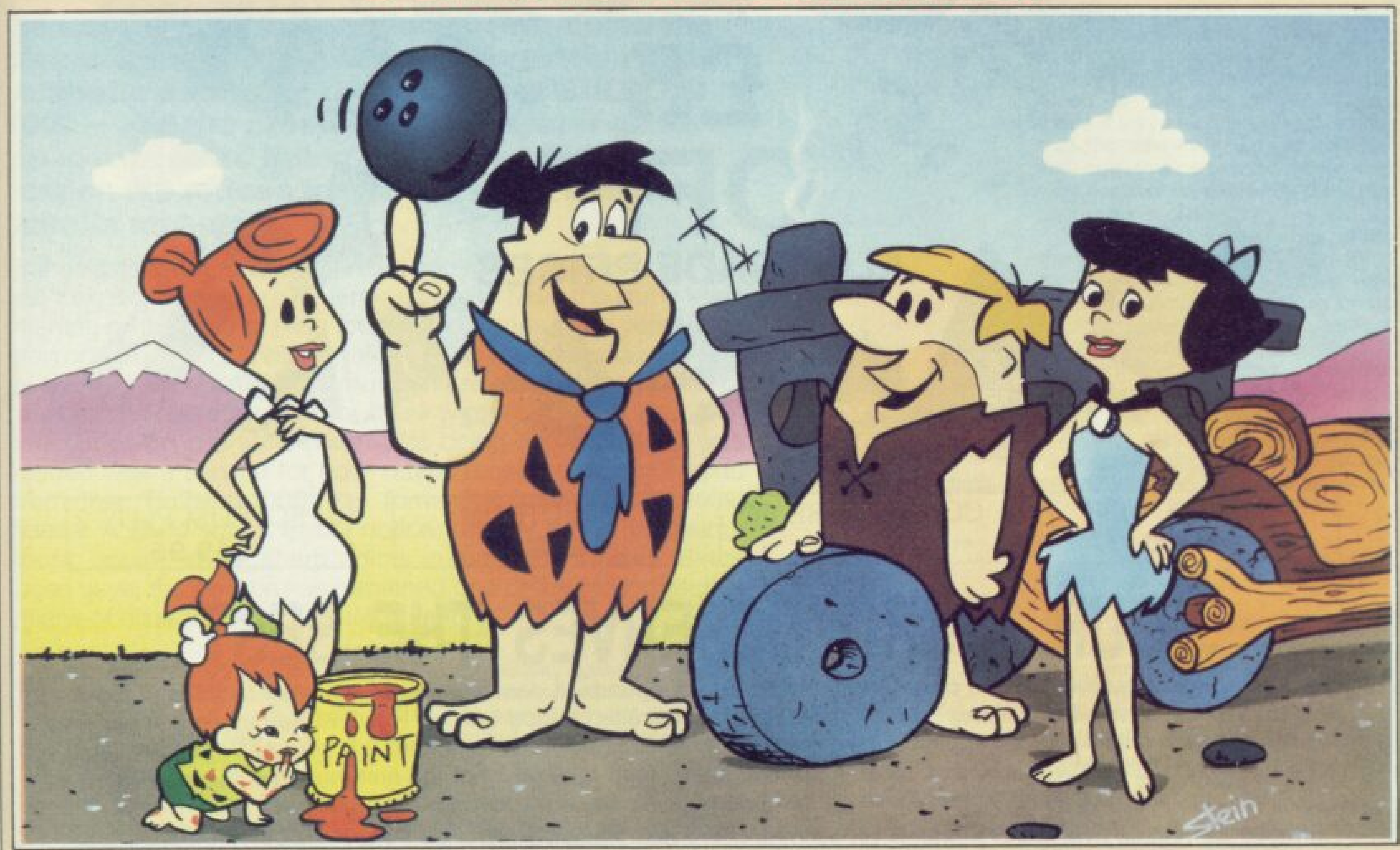
WE TAKE EVERY NEW ST RELEASE SO PHONE NOW FOR NEW TITLES!

*** LIMITED QUANTITY. P & P is free on all orders over £5. Under £5 please add 50p. Please state *The Games Machine* when ordering.**

PREHISTORIC BOXER SHORTS, AND IT'S . . .



8-BIT & 16-BIT COMPETITION



FRED FLINSTONE: typically average, red-blooded, prehistoric comical man. Likes: bowling, eating, sleeping. Hates: mother-in-law, working – especially redecorating – babysitting, being nagged. Typical prehistoric day: dealing with mother-in-law, work (specifically redecorating), babysitting, getting nagged.

Fred faces all his favourite tasks in this new adventure brought to your screens by **GrandSlam Entertainments**. Programmed by **Torque Software Developments**, whose credits include the recent *Terramex*, *Flintstones* puts the player in the roly-poly role of Fred Flintstone as he desperately tries to get to Bedrock Bowling Alley in time for his regular game.

Hounding him is his nagging wife, Wilma – a gorgeous doll she may be, but she has a sharp tongue. And hanging onto Fred's leopard-skin couture is Pebbles – the cutest kid anyone could want, but with more mischief in her than a cunning fox.

Just as Fred is ready to make his way to the bowling alley, Wilma chooses that precise moment to announce: 'My mother is arriving and Fred, don't you remember how you promised to paint the living room before she arrives?' Pebbles joins in the painting lark, assisting Fred by drawing flowers, writing her name and putting handprints on the walls. Keep the little sweetheart under control, Fred . . .

But even a relaxing bowl becomes fraught: Fred has to get his car to the Bedrock Bowl, his buddy, Barney Rubble, plays a mean game, and to wrap up an ideal day, Pebbles has to be rescued from a building site. As cute as *Flintstones* may look in the screen shots, it isn't an easy game . . .

A positive host of *Flintstones* goodies are waiting to be won, courtesy of **GrandSlam**: there are five first prizes of a *Flintstones* video (VHS), a pair of unique Flintstones boxer shorts and a copy of the game. And for five second-place prizes, we have boxer shorts and games, and ten runners will receive a copy of the **Flintstones** game.

Win prehysterical boxer shorts, videos and games!!

Flintstones is released for Spectrum, Commodore 64/128, Amstrad CPC, Atari ST and Amiga.

The five questions all relate to different aspects of the game's sections. Answer them correctly and you could be on your way to winning one of the prizes. Send entries on a dinosaur egg or the back of a sealed envelope (together with your name. address and model of computer) to: **FLINTSTONES COMPETITION, THE GAMES MACHINE, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*** to arrive here by May 19. Our standard competition results apply, if in doubt check out the masthead for details.

1. **An Old English Sheepdog is used by which manufacturer of paint as its mascot?**
2. **In bowling what is the term given when a player knocks down all the pins in one go?**
3. **If there are 292 pebbles per square foot on a beach, how many pebbles are there on a beach measuring 68 feet by 152 feet?**
4. **Your mother-in-law is an Aunt to your children. True or False?**
5. **Who published *Yabba Dabba Doo*, the first Flintstones game?**

NAILING BULLS TO THE DOOR

When Martin Chater and Mike Carroll of Visions Software, together with Julie Inskip, who worked for distributors Centresoft, noted the serious lack of promotional information about computer software, the result was BULLETIN 1000 – and the promotional computer game video was born. Robin Hogg went to their London W8 offices to find out more about the bulletin makers.

Enthusiasts know all about up and coming new games, but you can't expect the buyers for large stores to have the same keen interest, or the time to read lots of magazines. Two years ago, their only sources of reliable information were magazines such as CRASH and ZZAP! 64 through the reviews, but in terms of sales and in-store promotion, there was an obvious gap. The benefits of full promotion were not being realised; what was needed was a service for both retailers and consumers alike. From this, Bulletin 1000 was formed to make promotional videos. A *Bulla* was a Papal notice, usually nailed to church doors, issuing short, sharp edicts in the form of news. Since those days, the *bull*etin has remained one of the most effective means of disseminating vital information.

Until Bulletin 1000's formation, retailers only received promotional material from software distributors in a decentralised way and on a limited scale, but, as Julie Inskip insists, 'Retailers wanted more than what distributors could offer, which is when they turned to us.'

That was some two years ago; but first the other side of the coin – the software houses – had to be persuaded of the need; after all, they were going to have to pay for the advertisements. Video was not the first solution chosen by software companies. Before they came to see Bulletin 1000 as a direct link to retailers for product promotion, their efforts centred round contacting the multiples and independent computer stores and sending them poster packs. It was an effective method but limited to a static display once in the stores, and inflexible.

'The poster packs were just to get retailers to know about products,' says Julie, 'but from this we saw the opportunity for further promotion of a more comprehensive and effective nature.'

INTERACTIVE VIDEOS

Alternative methods of promotion were suggested and considered, including demonstration disks and cassettes previewing the latest games. This last required shops to set up at least one computer system to constantly display games, taking up space in-store and requiring constant attention, something the multiples and independents would not accept.

'The demonstration disks idea was considered but then dropped for obvious reasons, eventually it was decided that video would be the best promotional medium.'

The first videos were more of an interactive TV programme than today's stand alone series of advertisements. A presenter on screen talked about products, with competitions for the viewers to take part in as well as the usual product promotion.

" . . . it was decided that video would be the best promotional medium."

Julie explains: 'As everyone is tuned to watching television, we made it very much like a programme that the viewers could get involved with and, to a certain extent, interact with. A sort of *Blue Peter* for computer users on video!

'However, a problem arose when the video was put into service. Even though it went down well with retailers, attracting customers and helping subsequent sales, after a couple of showings it was found that viewers lost interest in the scenes with the presenter. He was superfluous – customers wanted to see the computer games and not someone talking – leading to valuable airtime on the tape being wasted while no-one watched the presenter.'

BOOTS THE EXCEPTION

After the third Bulletin 1000 'issue', the presenter was removed and the programme looked like the now standard series of short advertisements. Research conducted by Bulletin 1000 showed that this change was for the better. Stores using the videos were contacted and asked detailed questions relating to their effectiveness in terms of product sales, number of viewers and the average length of time customers watched the video. With the presenter's deletion, attention span time was increased from four minutes to 14.



Martin Chater loading a cassette into one of the two interlinked Sony U-Matic video machines



'Which meant that on a half hour tape,' Julie points out, ' an advertiser's product would be seen at least once by everyone who walked into the store.'

Bulletin 1000 deals with the main multiples selling computer software, (John Menzies, WH Smith and Woolworths) as well as independent retailers. Boots are the big exception because they produce their own video, but even so they regularly contact Bulletin 1000 requesting copies of advertisements to include in it – supplied free of charge as a gratuity.

But in the beginning, as Julie reveals, it was the independents who were the key to Bulletin 1000's success. 'The independent retailers are a breed unto themselves; and they took some convincing, but once they were interested, they were very supportive and welcomed new ideas for the video. As soon as the multiples saw the video through the independents, and we saw that it was a successful medium to promote products through, we approached each other and it took off from there.'

With Bulletin 1000 now dealing successfully with most British retailers it seemed only logical to turn attention towards Europe as the next objective.

'The market for promotional videos has really opened up with orders from abroad. We deal with customers in France, Holland, Germany, Italy, Scandinavia and more recently Spain. We have helped a lot of British firms show their products in Japan, notably Nintendo software – which is good for them as it gives them a foothold in what is a market rich in potential. The different languages are only a minor problem as the videos are essentially the same; all that's needed is a translation into the required language before they are sent out.' A simple matter in London where numerous agencies retain the services of professional 'voice-over' artistes and translators.

Extensive customer support is very much in evidence with discounts and special offers for clients renewing subscriptions. For new customers, deals were set up allowing clients to get the videos and equipment they required through Bulletin 1000 at lower cost than buying direct or through rental firms. This extensive customer support has long-term advantages not only through existing customers giving their continued, dedicated support to Bulletin 1000, but also through new clients who emerge constantly, particularly in Europe.

EXTREME ADS

In some cases, adverts show nothing of the game bar the title. *Bedlam* from Go! was a good example of this type of 'teaser' in which the game title appeared with a voice-over shouting 'Bedlam!'. This style of promotion is certainly original and eye-catching and Bulletin 1000 are watching it very closely indeed to determine its success (or failure) as an alternative form of advertising.

Advertisements tend to be 60 seconds long, although the big Christmas releases are sometimes as much as 90 seconds – and longer. An extreme case was Ocean's advertisement for *Platoon*, which was also to appear on the Columbia Video of the film. A unique event in computer software history, it lasted all of seven seconds! This incredibly limited amount of time proved a major headache for Bulletin 1000. 'The specifications for the recording were terrible,' recalls Julie. 'It had to be exact – no more, no less – and it was extremely frustrating having to compress all the information on the game into seven seconds. We had to keep re-editing and cutting bits out while trying to put in everything Ocean wanted to say about the game, along with the artwork, packaging and the Ocean logo.'

"on a half hour tape an advertiser's product would be seen at least once by everyone who walked into the store."

In the case of games-of-the-film and other licensed products, Bulletin 1000 use libraries to obtain relevant material such as music, special film or television sequences or scenes from the licensed product itself, subsequently paying royalties for their use.

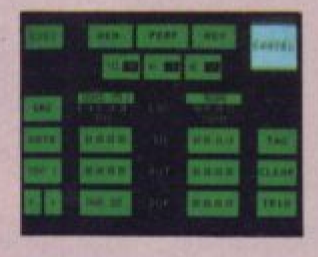
Occasionally they have to record from coin-ops for licence-holding software companies, but there are problems: 'We don't like to record from coin-ops, to be quite honest, because the kids don't want to see what they can't buy – they can't buy an arcade machine! We'll do it if we show a computer version with it in comparison but they're very difficult to record from. We either have to bring them in-house or go to the manufacturers and record there, and even then we have to contend with American standards and incompatible formats. So in general, we don't record from coin-ops that much.'

SO HOW'S IT DONE?

It is in the recording and editing suite that the videos are actually created. Within one room, the three main processes – recording, editing and duplication – are all performed using a synch-locked interfacing link between each.

Beginning with the recording phase, the system is set up to simultaneously record the game onto a VHS video tape and a record-only Sony U-Matic system. The actual setting up can take a while, rerouting connecting leads linking up the recording units and the relevant computer on which the software company's game is to be played. As the game is played the twin recordings are made. A time code is automatically generated, and appears on every frame of the VHS recording to display each scene of the game in hours, minutes, seconds and frames, each second being made up of 25 frames. At the same time it is embedded on every frame of the U-Matic recording, but it appears only on screen, not on the video tape image.

Once complete, the VHS tape is shown to the client software company. At this stage, the client decides which scenes from the game should be used in the advertisement, pinpointing their requirements by means of the time code visible at the bottom of the screen.



"We have helped a lot of British firms show their products in Japan, notably Nintendo software . . . "

'Using this system, explains Julie, 'software companies have total freedom to put any scenes they want in the advertisement. The customer decides which scenes are to go in and in effect we produce a tailor-made commercial for them. Any ideas that the client has about the composition of the commercial, how it is to finally look and the order of scenes, can be turned into reality quite easily through this system. The final video commercial, in effect, is a virtually direct copy of what the software company specifies.'

IT'S ALL IN THE EDITING

The next stage is editing. Audio and video connectors are used to link the primary 'source' U-Matic (with the embedded time codes) to a secondary 'object' U-Matic machine onto which only the selected scenes the software company wants are recorded, the VHS version having only been used for the selection. The editing operation is run through an executive screen using a mouse. All standard video operations of both source and object video systems are controlled through the edit software.

Game sequences can be tagged onto the end of other previously recorded sequences or trimmed, allowing a number of black screens to appear between scenes which effectively creates a pause between sequences. Each sequence has its own start and end time code (in and out-points) with the video system taking the specified time regions and transferring them onto the secondary U-Matic tape.

Corporate logos and special title screens are done here but for the more exotic generated video effects, Bulletin 1000 uses the services of another company, TSI. They do the sort of shots where packaging whirls, flips and zooms about the screen, as well as caption information detailing the game title, producers, formats on which it is to appear and prices.

The final product is then copied over to a master tape and the duplication phase is started. The format used by most of Bulletin 1000's customers is VHS; very few Betamax recordings are made, reflected in the ratio of duplicating machines they have – 38 VHS, two Betamax. 'That's about the percentage in terms of demand for our tapes,' says Julie. 'At the moment the VHS system, awful in quality that it is, is the system which everyone is using. We can also record and reproduce in stereo, but it depends on the retailers having stereo machines in large numbers which doesn't seem likely at the present time.'

TALKBACK

When the finished video is sent to the multiples, independent retailers and overseas customers, the process does not stop there; feedback is continuous from all areas of the market. 'We are in a wonderful position in that we can talk to virtually everyone in the industry. We get to



"We do a good job for everybody . . . " says Julie Inskip

talk to the distributors who use our videos for sales training and the retailers and independent stores provide feedback.

'Through the multiples we can also talk to the customers who are, in the end, the people who matter most. We have had very favourable responses to the video from the feedback we get. When software companies come to record, they tell us how the sales went in relation to the video. We also run our own spot checks with multiples to establish the effectiveness of the video and particular advertisements, especially experimental ones. On all counts, the response has been very favourable.'

And what about Bulletin 1000's position in the market? Surely their success has prompted other, similar, operations? Martin Chater says not. 'We have the market pretty well sewn up, with computer games and music and film videos produced here. We have the multiples as clients, we have the independent retailers as well, and with our increasing dealings with Europe we're in a good position as leaders in our field.'

Julie agrees: 'The reason is that this market place is not that big compared with other industries. The use of video as a promotional tool is very new, particularly when it comes to using it in the computer industry. We do a good job for everybody, striking a fine balance between what the retailers and the software companies want and what the kids want, the kids are in the end the people who matter.'

'The best thing about video promotion of computer games,' adds Martin, 'is that the games are totally audio-visual, nothing else compares with them, not even music. They are the most obvious choice for audio-visual presentation.'

Which prompts another question: with the recent advances in CD-ROM and CD Video Disks, is Martin planning to adopt the new technology?

'We keep an eye on technological developments, but the technology that we deal with at this level has to be tempered by what's cost effective for both the advertisers as an advertising promotional medium and what hardware's available for the retailer at a realistic level. We keep an eye on technology advances and their potential applications, so when the change comes, we'll be there in the forefront of video promotion.'



In the background, part of the complex patchfield which allows different source computer and target video recorders to be linked together

BULLETIN 1000 INFORMATION

Julie Inskip was an employee at Centresoft, a major software distributor. Martin Chater and Mike Carroll were both involved with Visions, a high-profile software house. In February 1985 they all met at the LET (trade show) at Olympia and started another software company called CSM. Encountering a serious problem in identifying all the multiple and independent retailers, they set up Bulletin 1000 in May 1985.

At first all video production was done through TSI Video Studios, but recently they have installed in-house facilities for everything except complex graphics work. At TSI, graphics work is undertaken using *Charisma*, Quantel's *Paintbox* and *Supernova* art utilities. Bulletin 1000 also has an Amiga and operator so that clients can enjoy a wide range of computer graphics facilities for enhancing advertisements on the spot.


REACH FOR THE STARS
at
The 11th Official
commodore
computer show
Returning to London with a celebrity supporting cast
Champagne Suite and Exhibition Centre, Novotel, Hammersmith, London W6
Friday June 3 10am-6pm
Saturday June 4 10am-6pm
Sunday June 5 10am-4pm
MEET
TESSA SANDERSON
Olympic Gold Medallist
Chat to the big names from Chelsea FC
Say Hello to Adam Faith
Mystery guest appearances
Music
Discover why Commodore computers are hitting the high notes around the world
Business
Visit the Business World sector – the show within a show. See how your company can benefit from the power and versatility of Commodore machines
Programming
Seize the opportunity to talk to the famous software authors who are keeping Commodore at the head of the pack
Games
Hurry along to the fabulous Commodore games arcade and play all the latest hit titles – FREE
The fantastic AMIGA
Seeing is believing! This is YOUR chance to try it out for yourself!
42
Galan '86

ROB STEEL'S GETTING ADVENTUROUS

SHERLOCK – THE RIDDLE OF THE CROWN JEWELS

Infocom

COMMODORE 64/128 Diskette: £19.99
PC COMPATIBLES Diskette: £24.99

Sherlock – The Riddle Of The Crown Jewels is the first story in Infocom's new Immortal Legends series, developed in conjunction with Challenge Inc. Using Infocom's development tools, Challenge lends its own blend of puzzles and plotting to interactive fiction. The author, **Bob Bates**, lives in Greenbelt, Maryland and is a graduate of Georgetown University. This is his first adventure release.

Sherlock Holmes has been the subject of many adventures in the past, however, Infocom have put a slightly different slant on the scenario by allowing the player to take the role of Doctor Watson rather than the deerstalkered super sleuth.

Holmes's arch-nemesis, the villainous Moriarty, has stolen the Crown Jewels. The timing of the crime is particularly dastardly, it is Jubilee Week and a Royal procession is to take place through the streets of London in two days. Should the jewels not be recovered in time for the Queen to wear them, the theft will be exposed and the British government will fall into international disgrace. Scotland Yard has tried every trick in the book to trace the thief, to no avail. Hence the PM himself visits Holmes's home to ask for his help. You, as Doctor Watson, arrive at 221B Baker Street while the PM is waiting in the parlour to see Sherlock.

You find the housekeeper, Mrs Hudson, in a terrible state. It transpires that Holmes has not been out of his study for three days, he has entered one of his depressed states of mind for which only you know the cure. Eager to help, you march up to his room and show your old friend today's newspaper. As soon as he reads of the jewel theft, Holmes snaps out of his depression and into action.

The PM is now allowed into the room and subsequently hands over a piece of paper on which is written a clue, and a less than veiled threat to Holmes. From this, Sherlock surmises that the thief is none other than Moriarty. Aware of how well the villain knows him and his sleuthing ways, Holmes decides to alter his detecting tactics by allowing you to conduct the investigation . . . under his guidance of course. This way he hopes to thwart Moriarty's plans to kill him, and find the Crown Jewels before the procession ensues.

HOLMES IS WHERE THE ART IS

An examination of the clue and the map of London (supplied in the packaging) should give you some idea of where to begin the investigation, and reading the instruction manual may help you find a reliable way of getting there. Two types of cab are available to you: the growler and the hansom, one of these is more trustworthy than the other, but both are free! Exploring olde London towne is interesting, from the most famous landmarks to the gloomiest back streets, Holmes trails Watson offering advice and information when he can, although most of the time the good Doctor has to figure things out for himself. Travel is quicker by cab; walking from place to place can take valuable time – and you only have until 9.00 Monday morning to solve the crime.

The game is standard Infocom style with a status bar at the screen's top and an abundance of white text which simply oozes atmosphere through the monitor from the black background.

Unfortunately there are one or two elements which are not quite up to Infocom's usual struggle for perfection: a sign outside the temporarily closed Tower of London apologises for any inconvenience caused and then offers, 'Have a nice day!'. This Americanism – which I'm sure didn't exist in 1887 – ruined any atmosphere the game had built up and brought me down to earth with a bump.

IT'S A FAIR CAB, GUV'NOR

Even though I only completed 36% of the game in the short time I had to play it, I still encountered one or two other oversights. Whilst sitting in a growler parked near a man selling telescopes, I inadvertently managed to get the game very confused: the man offers to sell me a telescope for an inflated price.

The cabbie says: 'Where to, Guv'nor?'

I input HAGGLE, and the program asks 'Haggle with who?'

The cabbie says 'Where to, Guv'nor?'

I input MAN (indicating who I want to haggle with) and the cabbie says, 'Oh good, I've never been THERE before,' and goes careering off through the streets of London with Holmes and I still inside. We eventually stop in a random location miles from the telescope vendor. Most infuriating.

During the rest of my Watsonian escapades I met Beefeaters, security guards, pet shop owners and hundreds of tourists. I was able to row up and down the Thames, visit Westminster Abbey, Scotland Yard, Madame Tussauds and Buckingham Palace. Holmes followed me everywhere and, although he didn't offer that much helpful advice, his presence wasn't as annoying as that of a certain dwarf who once 'helped' me on a previous quest.

Sherlock is enjoyable, its initial ease encourages you to play on, and as puzzles are solved and time ticks by, a certain necessity to crack the case is instilled. The on-screen hints are tempting to use when a seemingly insurmountable problem is encountered, but true adventurers should find them easy enough to resist. I shall return to olde London towne in the guise of Watson during my own time, this, to me as a reviewer, is the sign of a good adventure.

ATMOSPHERE 87%
INTERACTION 85%
OVERALL 86%

LOADS OF MIDNIGHT

CRL

SPECTRUM Cassette: £9.95

Adventures written to be humorous usually fail miserably as all they do is send up the more serious side of genre. Taking a product and mocking it to try to be amusing is easy and shows a lack of imagination on the part of the author. *Loads Of Midnight* is one such game.

The Land of Midnight is the setting, a place where the computer age has recently dawned and sales of software are booming. It transpires that Gloompork the evil one, banished to the Northern wastes some years before, is bent on conquest. He has learned of the mind control properties of a certain black gem to be found embedded in a golden crown, and he wants it. With the gem in his possession people would do his bidding and he could build a software industry all his own – power and recognition would be his. However, many small companies still thrive, one such

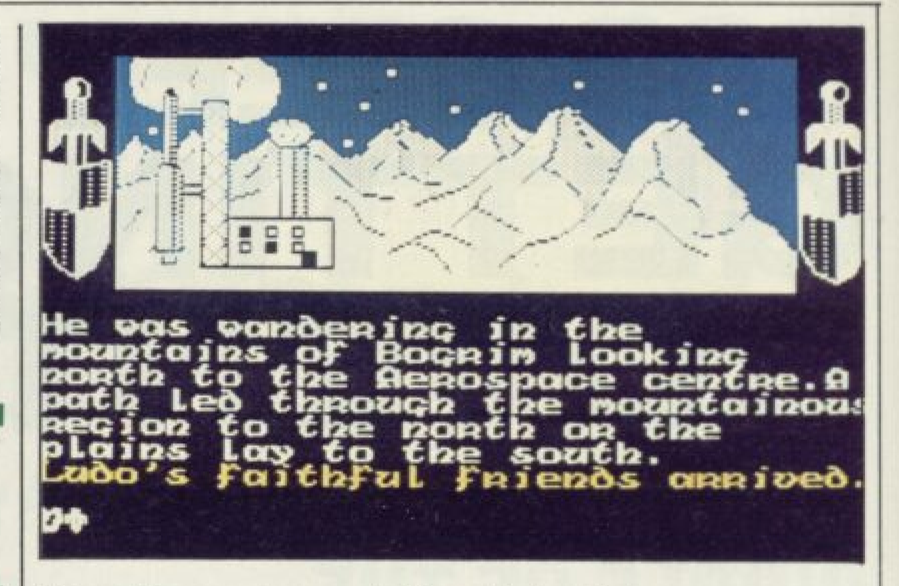
PRESS ANY KEY

being owned by Ludo, who just happens presently to be in possession of the golden crown (although being good of mind, he would not use it for personal gain). Fortunately he hears of Gloompork's avaricious interest and decides he must destroy the crown by casting it away from the top of the Tower of Doom. Only by doing this will the Land of Midnight be safe from Gloompork's dire threat.

A LOAD OF . . .

Written using the *Quill*, *Illustrator* and *Patch*, *Loads Of Midnight* lacks atmosphere. The graphics are good and nicely reminiscent of *Lords Of Midnight* but the text descriptions let them down badly. Most of the writing is taken up with what exits are available, which soon becomes tedious. Admittedly I did not get very far, mostly because I couldn't be bothered. There is nothing in the game to warrant perseverance, and the attempts at humour are childish, often irritating. It would be nice to see some original humour injected into some of these utility-created adventures.

ATMOSPHERE 28%
INTERACTION 22%
OVERALL 26%



The graphics are a close parody of the original masterpiece

FEDERATION

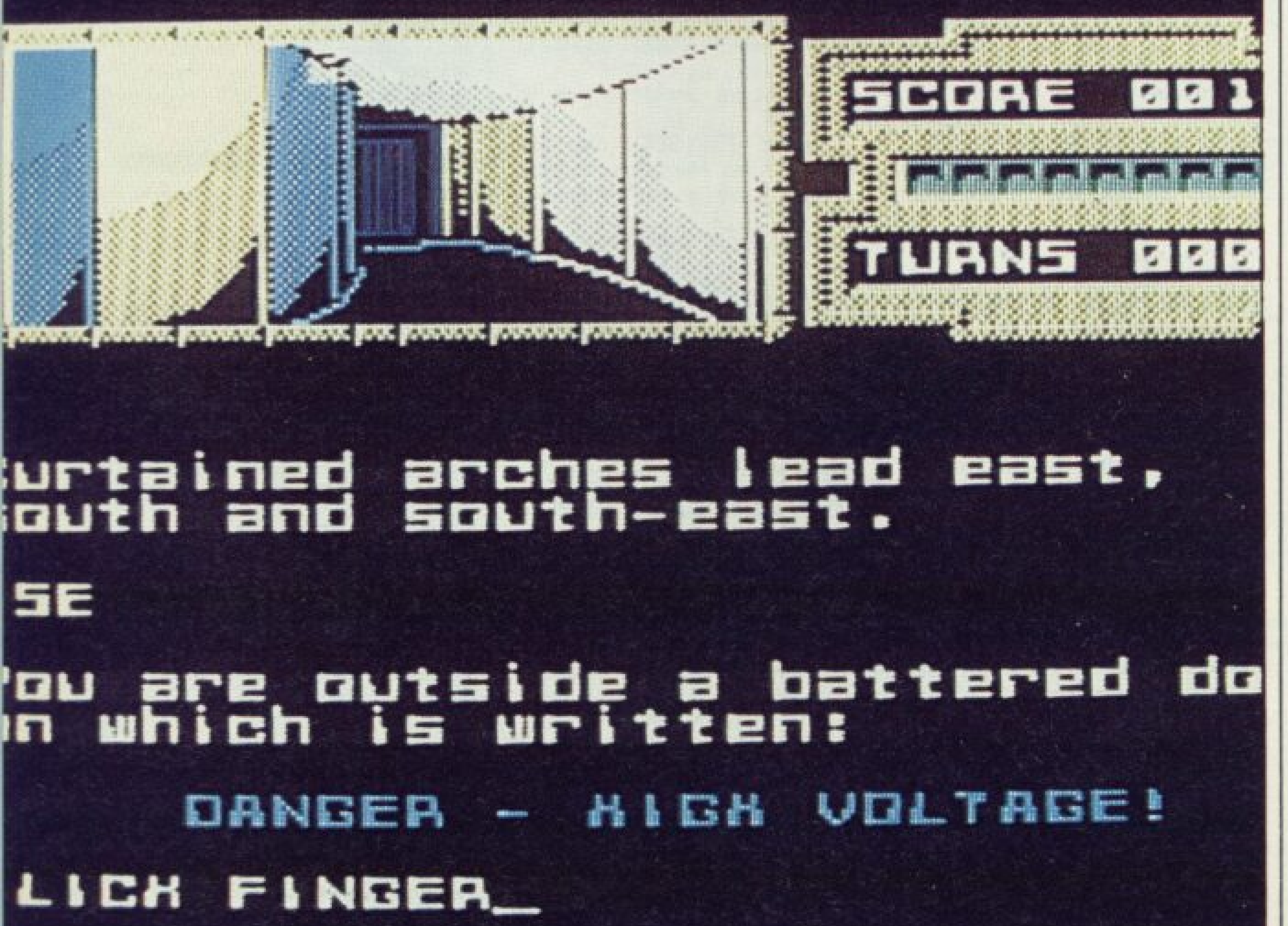
CRL
SPECTRUM Cassette: £9.95
AMSTRAD Diskette: £14.95

Once upon a time in the golden olden days of adventuring when all that was required by the player was the old verb/noun input, there lived a software company that churned out games thick and fast – mostly written using Gilsoft's utility the *Quill*. Eighth Day Software produced some above average quests including; *Faerie*, *Ice Station Zero* and one of my all time favourites, *Quann Tulla*. *Federation* is a revamped version of the latter.

Quann Tulla is the flagship of the federation, unfortunately its designer, Erra Quann, has hijacked it. He pilots it to an outpost of the evil Empire where he hopes to sell the secret of its innovative engines. You take the role of a member of the Federation's elite secret service; your mission is to stop Quann.

The adventure begins inside a cracked life support bubble in the smoke-filled interior of your ship. The first problem is one of avoiding suffocation, but it is easily solved.

Released years ago by Eighth Day as **Quann Tulla, Federation** *is a revamped version with graphics*



The vessel is drifting close to the battered hull of the Quann Tulla, and pressing the blue button found in the cockpit allows access to it via an umbilical cord. Once these two initial problems have been dealt with the game is yours to explore.

WONDERFULLY WEIRD

Science fiction is usually a good topic for adventure games as it is only the author's imagination which limits the scope. All kinds of weird and wonderful objects and creatures may be incorporated in such adventures with no logical reason needed for their presence or role in the game. *Quann Tulla* is one such game which incorporates many futuristic/alien elements to good effect. The ball that changes size when picked up, the computer terminals, the shock-cape and the numerous hi-tech creatures found in the corridors of the great ship, all help to build up a believable atmosphere. Although most of the objects to be found may be alien to you, the EXAMINE option is sensibly implemented, helping explain, or hint at, the uses of most of them.

The screen layout is nicely done, with a small graphic representation of some locations displayed in the top left-hand corner of a well designed control panel. This also shows your score – 10,000 is possible – and the number of turns you have taken. Below, scroll the text descriptions.

Quann Tulla was a good game when it was first released all those years ago; its overhaul and new look modernise and help maintain its appeal, although the price is a little steep for a single-load game.

ATMOSPHERE 75%
INTERACTION 64%
OVERALL 70%

GOING OVERBOARD

Stretch out your scrawny necks and drift in for a carrion landing with VULTURES – an unlikely, but involving boardgame – plus: be Jimmy Greaves et al with Serif's adaptation of Central TV's SPORTING TRIANGLES.

GAMES NEWS

Buying **Paradigm**'s latest game, ***Psychology Slander Intuition*** (PSI), set for release in early June, could lose you a lot of friends. It gives you the chance to tell your chums and relatives exactly what you think of them, and it is, say Paradigm, incredibly easy – the hardest part is living with yourself afterwards. Players take turns to pick personality cards showing the name of a pop or movie star, your best friend, or even your better half. Without showing the card, the objective for the other players is to guess the mystery person's identity by asking you **PSI Questions**.

PSI, the game that answers questions like: What kind of inflatable would your sister be?



These can be anything from: 'If this person was a holiday resort, which one would they be?' to, 'If this person was a member of the pig family, what kind of pig would they be?'.

Naturally if that person was your best friend the proceedings might become, well . . . difficult to say the least.

The game in its spoken form has become popular in pubs and at parties during the time designer **Steve Knight** has struggled to publish after rejections from many other companies. THE GAMES MACHINE has yet to see how it improves over the spoken version, but we will keep you informed.

The Games Team, whose previous title ***A Question Of Sport***, earned them a reputation within the boardgame market, are set to release their next creation in August; licensed from Guinness Publishing, it is called ***Genius – The Game Of Phenomenal Facts*** and revolves around questions-and-answers based on record-breaking achievements as described in that well-known anthology of personal madness, *The Guinness Book Of Records*. 'It could not be described as 'Trivial',' states **Bob Johnson** of The Games Team. The package, which also contains *The Guinness Book Of Phenomenal Pictures*, retails at £29.95 and is being sold through Toy Brokers Ltd.

Front Page Splash – a simulation on a board, inspired (if that's the word) by the world of journalism, is about to be launched by **Octogo Games**. Just like the real thing, six people try to create headlines and stories from random words – we do it all the time here at THE GAMES MACHINE. The playing board resembles a daily newspaper's front page and the game comes with 600 words, each with different scores depending on their length, with which to build up the story. Players take turns to add words and the winner is the one with the highest score when the story is completed – a sort of Scrabble with whole words rather than individual letters.

A copy of ***Front Page Splash*** is being wired to us at this very moment and if it doesn't change the way we write, we'll demand our money back. Look for a review next month – now who last used *Roget's Thesaurus* . . .

VULTURES

Henry Games, £19.45
2-4 players

From Henry Games's London headquarters at 42 **Beak** Street (it's true . . .) comes *Vultures*, one of the most simplistic yet highly entertaining boardgames we've played for ages.

The board represents a desert landscape complete with two oases and four nesting trees. The yummy objective is to be first vulture to collect five carcasses and return to your designated tree.

At the start, playing vultures are each dealt three cards from a collection of flight, fight, carcass and waddle cards; any left over are placed in the discard pile face down.

At the start of a turn the vulture in play declares if it has a carcass card by squawking loudly and throwing the carcass card next to the discard pile face up. Next, it takes a new card from the discard pile and turns the following card face up on the other pile. The grid reference shown on the displayed card is then used to place a carcass at the corresponding grid reference on the board. It may sound complicated but works fine in play.

If a vulture does not have a carcass card it can carry out one of two movements: one allows the vulture to take a new card from the discard pile, two allows the use of a flight card to move the number of squares the card shows. A waddle is a similar card, but movement is restricted to only one square.

The objective in flying around is to get to a carcass and claim it for your own before any other player does.

Fighting – another way of collecting carcasses – takes place when a Main Vulture Fight card is drawn from the pack and displayed. Players drawing this card have to give a battle-cry consisting of jumping up and down, flapping their wings and squawking loudly. Challenging an opponent to fight is simply achieved by landing on an occupied square, although vultures nesting in trees cannot be attacked.

Each player should own a couple of red fight cards by this point in the game – the cards each have a value on them, ranging from one to ten. The vulture with the highest fight card wins the challenge and receives one of his opponent's carcasses (no point, then, in challenging a carcassless vulture). The big bonus in challenging happens if the vulture being challenged has no fight cards – if, this is the case the challenging vulture receives all the carcasses and the unlucky vulture is out of the game.



A bit of Vulture culture from Henry Games

The game is concluded when one vulture has claimed five carcasses and has nested in its tree.

THE VERDICT

Vultures is a great launch product for Henry Games, it appealed immensely to everyone who played it – probably because it combines strategic thinking with a bit of lunacy thrown in. Additionally, it's your skill that eventually helps you to emerge the victor – there are no dice adding luck to the consequences. Admittedly, it took a couple of games for everyone to fully decipher the instructions and see how to work them to their best advantage, but having done this, *Vultures* showed itself as an (oddly enough) attractive, absorbing game of greed and supremacy.

PRESS ANY KEY

SPORTING TRIANGLES

Serif, £14.99
2-4 players or teams

As the title suggests, and by its very nature, *Sporting Triangles* is only likely to appeal to players heavily into sport. If you are the sort who prefers watching the Saturday afternoon film on BBC2, don't even bother having a go. The 3,000 questions supplied require considerable knowledge of not only present sporting facts but past ones too.

Players choose a playing triangle (yellow, green, white or red) and take turns to throw the die which dictates the number of squares they move clockwise around the triangular game board. Questions are asked when players land on red, green (both specialist sporting questions) or yellow (sporting trivia) squares. One point per correctly answered question is scored, marked by placing a small, solid plastic triangle of the player's colour in the triangular peg board.

Should a question have a bonus question attached, a correct answer scores the player two points. White squares represent harder questions and score two points for correct answers. The first player to fill their triangular score segment with pegs is declared the winner.

THE VERDICT

Sporting Triangles is a worthy trivia game if you have players who know about the many aspects of sport the questions cover. It really boils down to sporting *Trivial Pursuit*, so you can gauge whether you're going to like this or not before playing it. The boxed packaged is neatly designed, contains clear instructions – but can the boardgames market take another trivia-based game?



Errrr . . . Amazing! And . . . **Sporting Triangles** *is good all round . . . Marvellous!*

THE GAMES MACHINE CLASSIFIED SECTION

HOW TO REACH 200,000 OTHER READERS!

From TGM007 THE GAMES MACHINE Reader Classified Section will be read by literally thousands and thousands of people – probably the best available method of reaching other computer users with your small ads. Whether you want to buy, sell, swap, meet or merely inform, an inexpensive classified ad in THE GAMES MACHINE could soon be the ONLY way to do it!

CLASSIFIED HEADINGS

THE GAMES MACHINE Reader Classified Section is not open to trade or commercial advertisers, but Fanzines may use it. The headings are self-explanatory: WANTED, FOR SALE, SWAPLINE, USER GROUPS, PEN PALS, FANZINES and EVENTS DIARY (for club/user group news, meetings or planned events). However, be careful about TGM publishing dates with the last!

70 WORDS FOR ONLY £2.50!

Normally, your small ad in THE GAMES MACHINE will cost you a mere £2.50 for up to 35 words. But as a special opening offer, we're giving you the chance to place TWO ADS for the price of only one. You can place both in the same issue, if you like, or use the second, FREE AD, in a later issue – see the form for details.

HOW TO PLACE YOUR SMALL AD

Cut out and send off the form, together with your payment of £2.50 per entry form (cheques or postal orders preferably, made payable to NEWSFIELD LTD). Photocopies of the form are acceptable.

- The maximum is 35 words
- The service is not open to trade/commercial advertisers
- Small ads will be printed in the first available issue
- The editor reserves the right to refuse ads which do not comply with normal decent practice, or which could be interpreted as encouraging software piracy

ONE-OFF OPENING OFFER - A FREE SMALL AD!

The right-hand coupon may be used to place a second ad free of charge. This form MUST be cut from the magazine, no photocopies will be accepted. It can accompany your paid-for entry form to go in the same issue, or you may mark it for inclusion in up to TGM009. Free forms received on their own will be printed up to TGM009 as long as the sender has already PAID FOR AT LEAST ONE small ad up to the close of that issue.

TGM READER CLASSIFIEDS

Send to **THE GAMES MACHINE READER CLASSIFIEDS, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB**

Name ....

Address ....

....

.... Postcode ....

Tick Classified heading:

☐ Wanted ☐ For Sale ☐ Swapline ☐ Pen Pals ☐ User Groups ☐ Fanzines
☐ Events Diary ☐ Miscellaneous

Method of payment ☐ Cheque ☐ Postal Order

Write your advertisement here, one word per box, and include name, address and phone number if you want them printed.

TGM READER CLASSIFIEDS

FREE SMALL AD!

Send to **THE GAMES MACHINE READER CLASSIFIEDS, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB**

Name ....

Address ....

....

.... Postcode ....

Tick Classified heading:

☐ Wanted ☐ For Sale ☐ Swapline ☐ Pen Pals ☐ User Groups ☐ Fanzines
☐ Events Diary ☐ Miscellaneous

Method of payment ☐ Cheque ☐ Postal Order

Write your advertisement here, one word per box, and include name, address and phone number if you want them printed.

Please include my free second entry in TGM Issue: ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9

NEW LOW PRICE ST!

ST PRICE INCREASE

Due to a worldwide shortage of memory chips, prices of many computers have gone up. From April 1988, the Atari ST range is also likely to be affected. For details of any price increase, please return the coupon below for our latest literature.

£260 +VAT=£299

ONLY FROM SILICA

Finally, there's a personal computer that not only solves problems like other computers, but also solves the one problem that other computers have created. Affordability. Silica Shop are pleased to present the ST range of personal/business computers from Atari. The ST was designed utilizing the most recent breakthroughs in semiconductor technology, producing a personal computer that performs tasks with fewer parts. Which means it costs less to make. And less to buy. The latest ST computers now include built in power supplies and built in disk drives. The TOS operating system and GEM window environment are now on ROM chips which are already installed in the ST keyboard. This enables automatic instant booting when you switch on. Silica Shop are pleased to offer the complete Atari ST range. Our mail order department is situated in Sidcup and we have 3 retail outlets at Sidcup, Lion House (Tottenham Court Rd) and Selfridges (Oxford Street). We have eight years experience of Atari products, longer than any other UK company, and are well established as the UK's No.1 Atari specialist. With a group turnover of over £9 million and in excess of 80 staff, we offer you unbeatable service and support. We provide several facilities which you will find invaluable during your Atari computing life and most of these facilities are available **ONLY FROM SILICA**. We suggest that you read through what we have to offer, before you decide where to purchase your Atari ST.

FREE STARTER KIT - Only From Silica

When you purchase any Atari ST keyboard, you will not only receive the best value for money computer on the market, but you will also receive the following from Atari Corporation as part of the package:

** BASIC Language Disk * BASIC Manual * ST Owners Manual * TOS/GEM on ROM*

If you buy your ST from Silica Shop, you will also receive:

** NEOchrome Sampler - colour graphics program * 1st Word - Word Processor*

In addition, we at Silica would like to see you get off to a flying start with your new computer, so we have put together a special **ST STARTER KIT** worth over £100, which we are giving away **FREE OF CHARGE** with every ST computer purchased at our normal retail prices. This kit is available **ONLY FROM SILICA** and is aimed at providing users with a valuable introduction to the world of computing. We are continually upgrading the ST Starter Kit, which contains public domain and other licensed software, as well as books, magazines and accessories all relevant to ST computing. Return the coupon below for full details.

DEDICATED SERVICING - Only From Silica

At Silica Shop, we have a dedicated service department of seven full time Atari trained technical staff. This team is totally dedicated to servicing Atari computer products. Their accumulated knowledge, skill and experience makes them second to none in their field. You can be sure that any work carried out by them is of the highest standard. A standard of servicing which we believe you will find **ONLY FROM SILICA**. In addition to providing full servicing facilities for Atari ST computers (both in and out of warranty), our team is also able to offer memory and modulator upgrades to ST computers.

1Mb RAM UPGRADE: Our upgrade on the standard Atari 520ST-M or 520ST-FM keyboard will increase the memory from 512K to a massive 1024K. It has a full 1 year warranty and is available from Silica at an additional retail price of only £86.96 (+VAT = £100).

TV MODULATOR UPGRADE: Silica can upgrade the 1040ST-F to include a TV modulator so that you can then use it with your TV set. This is an internal upgrade and does not involve any untidy external boxes. A cable to connect your ST to any domestic TV is included in the price of the upgrade which is only £49 (inc VAT). The upgrade is also available for early 520ST computers at the same price.

THE FULL STOCK RANGE - Only From Silica

We aim to keep stocks of all Atari related products and our warehouse carries a stock of over £½ million. We import many software titles direct from the USA and you will find that we have new releases in advance of many of our competitors. Unlike dealers who may only stock selected titles, we have the full range. In addition, we carry a complete line of all books which have been written about the Atari ST. A range as wide as ours is something you will find is available **ONLY FROM SILICA**.

AFTER SALES SUPPORT - Only From Silica

Rest assured that when you buy your ST from Silica Shop, you will be fully supported. Our free mailings give news of releases and developments. This will help to keep you up to date with new software releases as well as what's happening in the Atari market. And in addition, our sales staff are at the end of a telephone line to service all of your Atari requirements. If you purchase an ST from Silica and would like any technical advice, we have a full time technical support team to help you get the best from your computer. Because we have both the staff and the systems specifically dedicated to providing after sales service on Atari ST computers, we are confident that our users enjoy an exceptionally high level of support. This can be received **ONLY FROM SILICA**.

FREE CATALOGUES - Only From Silica

At Silica Shop, we recognise that serious users require an in-depth information service, which is why we mail free newsletters and price lists to our ST owners. These are up to 48 pages long and are crammed with technical details as well as special offers and product descriptions. If you have already purchased an ST and would like to have your name added to our mailing list, please complete the coupon & return it to us. This information service is available **ONLY FROM SILICA**.

FREE OVERNIGHT DELIVERY - From Silica

Most orders are processed through our computer within 24 hours of receiving them. Most hardware orders are sent by the overnight GROUP 4 courier service FREE OF CHARGE to customers within the UK. This method helps to ensure minimum delay and maximum protection.

PRICE MATCH - Only From Silica

We hope that the combination of our low prices, FREE UK delivery service, FREE Starter Kit and FREE after sales support, will be enough to make you buy your Atari equipment from Silica Shop. If however, there is something you wish to purchase, and you find one of our competitors offering it at a lower price, then please contact our sales department, providing us with our competitor's name, address and telephone number. If our competitor has the goods in stock, we will normally match the offer (on a 'same product - same price' basis) and still provide you with our normal free delivery. We realise that we are not the only company who will match a competitor's price. However, if you come to us for a price match, you will also be entitled to our after sales service, including free newsletters and technical support. This makes our price match promise rather special, something you will receive **ONLY FROM SILICA**. We don't want you to go anywhere else for your Atari products. So shop at Silica, the UK's No1 Atari Specialist.

SIDCUP (& Mail Order) **01-309 1111**
1-4 The Mews, Hatherley Road, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4DX

LONDON **01-580 4839**
Lion House (1st floor), 227 Tottenham Court Rd, London, W1P OHX

LONDON **01-629 1234 ext 3914**
Selfridges (1st floor), Oxford Street, London, W1A 1AB

SO MUCH FOR SO LITTLE!

There is nothing that can compare with the incredible value for money offered by Atari's 520ST-FM. For only £260 (+VAT=£299), you can purchase a powerful 512K RAM computer, with a 95 key keyboard (including numeric keypad), MIDI interface, GEM, a palette of 512 colours, mouse controller, and a 512K built-in disk drive. The 520ST-FM has a TV modulator built-in, and comes with a lead to allow you to plug it straight into any domestic colour television set. The mains transformer is also built-in to the keyboard, so there are no messy external boxes. You couldn't wish for a more compact, powerful and stylish unit. Atari ST computers are now firmly established in the UK, there are nearly 500 software titles already available for a wide variety of applications and the list is growing all the time. And that's not all. When you buy your new 520ST-FM (or any Atari ST computer) from Silica Shop, you will get a lot more, including a FREE Silica ST Starter Kit worth over £100. Read the ONLY FROM SILICA section on the left, to see why you should buy your new high power, low price 520ST-FM from Silica Shop, the UK's No1 Atari Specialists. For further details of the range of Atari ST computers and the FREE Silica ST Starter Kit, complete and return the reply coupon below.

ATARI 520ST-FM NOW ONLY £260 (+VAT=£299)

520ST-FM with 512K RAM & mono monitor £399 (inc VAT) **Upgrade from 512K RAM to 1024K RAM £100** (inc VAT)

ATARI 1040ST-F - NEW PRICE

We are pleased to announce a new reduced price point on the 1040ST-F which is now available for only £499 (inc VAT). The 1040 is a powerful computer with 1Mb of RAM and also includes a built-in 1Mb double sided 3½" disk drive. The 1040 has been designed for use on business and professional applications most of which require a high resolution monochrome or colour monitor. It does not therefore have an RF modulator for use with a domestic TV set. Modulators can be fitted for £49 (inc VAT).

1040ST-F Keyboard Without Monitor	**£499** *(inc VAT)*
1040ST-F Keyboard + High Res SM125 Mono Monitor	**£599** *(inc VAT)*

If you would like further details of the 1040ST-F, return the coupon below.

MEGA ST's NOW IN STOCK

For the user who requires even more RAM than the 520 or 1040 ST's offer, the new MEGA ST computers are now available. There are two MEGA ST's, one with 2Mb of RAM and the other with a massive 4Mb. Both new computers are fully compatible with existing ST's and run currently available ST software. The MEGA ST's are styled as an expandable Central Processing Unit with open architecture and a detachable keyboard. They are supplied with GEM, a free mouse controller and all extras as with the 520 or 1040. Prices are as follows:

MEGA ST 2Mb Keyboard + CPU	**£899** *(inc VAT)*
MEGA ST 2Mb Keyboard + CPU + SM125 Mono Monitor	**£999** *(inc VAT)*
MEGA ST 4Mb Keyboard + CPU	**£1199** *(inc VAT)*
MEGA ST 4Mb Keyboard + CPU + SM125 Mono Monitor	**£1299** *(inc VAT)*

If you would like further details of the MEGA ST's, return the coupon below.

ATARI ST

To: Silica Shop Ltd, Dept GAMCH , 1-4 The Mews, Hatherley Road, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4DX

PLEASE SEND ME FREE LITERATURE ON THE ATARI ST

Mr/Mrs/Ms: .... Initials: .... Surname: ....

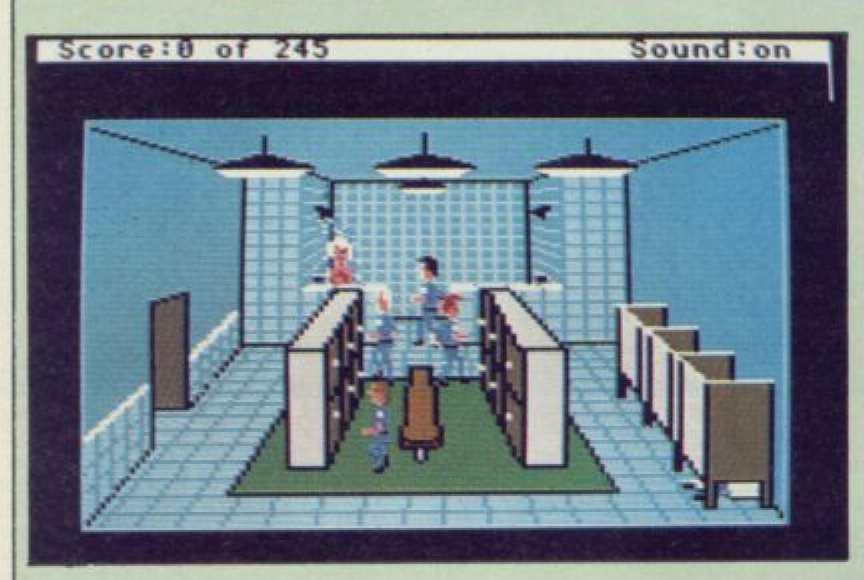
Address: ....

Postcode: ....

Do you already own a computer
If so, which one do you own? ....

HIT YOUR FUNNY BONE ON THE CHUCKLE BUTTON WITH THE

SIERRA COMPETITION



Win eight highly acclaimed graphic adventures with the emphasis on comedy!

16-BIT COMPETITION

A THOROUGHLY good romp through the pinacles of animated adventures awaits the lucky winners of this **Sierra On-line** competition. Sierra have recently been bombarding the adventure pages with 16-bit animated adventures, pumped full of rib-tickling black comedy. Three which have particularly struck gold in Rob Steel's judgement are *Space Quest II*, *Police Quest* and *Leisure Suit Larry* with marks of 95%, 92% and 83% respectively.

Here's your chance to win Sierra's entire catalogue of games, eight in all. The Sierra games are traditional adventures in the sense that the player has to type commands in order for the main character to act – however, rather than relying on text to provide adequate descriptions of locations, continual graphic displays – often with animated characters, all of whom are fully interactive and funny with it – are used.

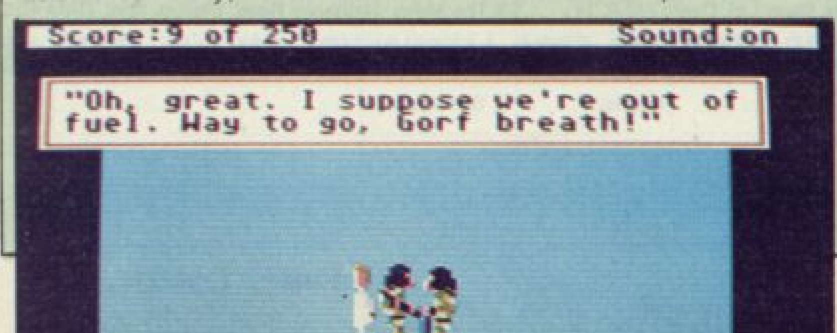
First-prize winner receives *King's Quest I*, *King's Quest II*, *King's Quest III*, *Space Quest I*, *Space Quest II*, *Leisure Suit Larry*, *Police Quest* and *3D Helicopter* where applicable (*Leisure Suit Larry* is not available for the Amiga and *3D Helicopter* is for the PC only). The following ten correct entries picked from the bag win a copy of Sierra's latest adventure *Space Quest II*.

To be in the running for one of the prizes on offer just tell us whether the five quotes below (taken from reviews of Sierra games in TGM003 and TGM004) are correct as they were originally printed – answer true or false. Write the answers down on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope together with your name, address and model of computer, and send it hyperdrive to: **SIERRA COMP, THE GAMES MACHINE, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*** to arrive no later than May 19. All entrants must comply with our competition rules as stated in the masthead.

1) **'... attempt to thwart the plans of Slimeface Vohaul.'**
2) **'... *Police Quest* includes more than 100 city streets ...'**
3) **'... makes John Travolta look like Patrick Moore peeling spuds ...'**
4) **'... overcome his 'jerkisms' and lose his virginity ...'**
5) **'... weed out Death Angel's gang and bring the racketeer to justice.'**









QUESTIONNAIRE

THE GAMES MACHINE is now six issues old, so it's time to ask you, the readers, what you think about the magazine and its contents. In addition, we would like to ask you some questions about what you do and don't do, what you like and dislike – they may seem nosy, but they all help us shape the magazine the way YOU want.

Please fill out as much of this form as possible (placing a tick in the appropriate boxes, or filling them in with numbers as requested), and send it (or a photocopy if you don't want to cut up your copy) to **TGM QUESTIONNAIRE, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*** to arrive here before May 19. The first form drawn out of mailbag after this date earns the sender £50 worth of software of his or her choice, plus a TGM T-shirt. The next four forms drawn earn their senders £20 worth of software, plus a T-Shirt.

GENERAL

Age: ....

Are you . . .
- [ ] Male
- [ ] Female
- [ ] At school
- [ ] At College/University
- [ ] Working Full Time
- [ ] Working Part Time
- [ ] Unemployed

MONEY MATTERS

On average, how much do you spend on computer games every week?
- [ ] £2-£5
- [ ] £6-£10
- [ ] £11-£20
- [ ] More Than £20

Have you purchased a utility in the last six months?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

If 'yes', please state type

....

Do you intend to purchase a utility in the next six months?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

If 'yes', please state type

....

....

Have you purchased a peripheral in the last six months?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

If 'yes', please state type

....

....

Do you intend to purchase a peripheral in the next six months?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

If 'yes', please state type

....

....

Do you intend to buy a new computer or games console in the next six months?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

If 'yes', tick the appropriate box
- [ ] Spectrum 128 or +3
- [ ] Amstrad CPC
- [ ] Commodore 64/128
- [ ] Electron
- [ ] Atari ST
- [ ] Amiga
- [ ] IBM PC Compatible
- [ ] Archimedes
- [ ] MSX II
- [ ] Nintendo console
- [ ] Atari console
- [ ] Sega Console

What is the major influence on your decision to buy a computer game (please indicate in order of priority 1-6)?
- [ ] Friend's recommendation
- [ ] Magazine Review
- [ ] Advertising
- [ ] Author
- [ ] Producer
- [ ] Price

ARE YOU WELL READ?

When did you first buy THE GAMES MACHINE?
Issue: ....

How many issues have you bought

altogether?
- [ ] All
- [ ] One
- [ ] Two
- [ ] Three
- [ ] Four

On average, how many other people read your copy of TGM?
....

How do you get TGM?
- [ ] Subscription
- [ ] Newsagent Reserved/delivered
- [ ] Off the shelf

Which other magazines do you buy?
- [ ] ACE
- [ ] Commodore Computing International
- [ ] Commodore User
- [ ] Computer & Video Games
- [ ] ZZAP!
- [ ] CRASH
- [ ] Popular Computing Weekly
- [ ] Other (Please Specify)

....
....

Which other magazines do you read regularly but not buy?
- [ ] ACE
- [ ] Commodore Computing International
- [ ] Commodore User
- [ ] Computer & Video Games
- [ ] ZZAP!
- [ ] CRASH
- [ ] Popular Computing Weekly
- [ ] Other (Please Specify)

....
....

What type of game do you enjoy playing (in order of preference 1-6)?
- [ ] Adventures
- [ ] Arcade Adventures
- [ ] Shoot-'em-ups
- [ ] Simulations
- [ ] RPG
- [ ] Strategy
- [ ] Other (Please Specify)

....
....

CONTENTS

Please award marks out of ten for each of the following features in TGM
- [ ][ ] Advertisements
- [ ][ ] Board Games
- [ ][ ] Competitions
- [ ][ ] Coin-op Confrontation
- [ ][ ] Fantasy Games (RPG etc)
- [ ][ ] General features
- [ ][ ] Graphic Matters
- [ ][ ] Hi-tech gadgets/toys
- [ ][ ] Industry features (Mel Croucher)
- [ ][ ] Info Desk
- [ ][ ] Mercy Dash comic strip
- [ ][ ] Music Matters (Jon Bates)
- [ ][ ] News
- [ ][ ] Previews
- [ ][ ] Reviews
- [ ][ ] Readerpage
- [ ][ ] Rob Steel's Adventures
- [ ][ ] Subscription Offers

Do you think TGM should offer any of the following?

Gallup software charts
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

Readers' Charts
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

Play By Mail column
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

Game High Scores
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

Game Playing Tips
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

Regular Compunet coverage
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

Regular 'hire' video reviews
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

SOFTWARE COVERAGE

Please rate TGM's coverage of software out of ten
- [ ][ ] News
- [ ][ ] Previews
- [ ][ ] Reviews

Are the Reviews detailed enough?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

Are the reviews long enough?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

Are there enough screen shots?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

Are the machine-specific comments detailed enough?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

How often do you agree with the ratings?
- [ ] Always
- [ ] Mostly
- [ ] Rarely
- [ ] Never

Would you like to see the current review system changed or improved?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

If 'yes', how? . . .

....
....
....

Do you use TGM as a source of reference when buying software?
- [ ] Always
- [ ] Sometimes
- [ ] Never

What do you think of the standard of TGM's covers?
- [ ] Excellent
- [ ] Okay
- [ ] Rubbish

GENERAL BUYING HABITS

What is your weekly income?
- [ ] Up to £5
- [ ] £5 to £10
- [ ] £10 to £30
- [ ] £30 to £100
- [ ] £100 to £200
- [ ] £200 plus

What products would you like to see on offer in TGM's Mail Order?

....
....
....

Where do you buy most of your clothes?
- [ ] Large Retail Chains (M+ S, BHS, Woolworth etc)
- [ ] High Street Fashion Shops (Next, Top Man etc)
- [ ] Specialist Fashion Shops
- [ ] Other (Please specify)

....
....

Do you own or have access to a:
- [ ] Record player
- [ ] Cassette deck
- [ ] CD Player?
- [ ] Video Recorder

On average, how many of the following do you buy a month?
- [ ][ ] Records (Singles)
- [ ][ ] Records (LPs)
- [ ][ ] Recorded cassettes
- [ ][ ] CDs
- [ ][ ] Pop/Music Videos
- [ ][ ] Budget Films on Video

How often do you hire films on video
- [ ] More than once a week
- [ ] Once a week
- [ ] Every other week
- [ ] Once a month
- [ ] Every other month
- [ ] Less than twice a year
- [ ] Never

How often do you buy canned drinks?
- [ ] More than once a day
- [ ] Once a day
- [ ] Every other day
- [ ] More than once a week
- [ ] Once a week
- [ ] Less than once a fortnight
- [ ] Never

How often do you buy crisps, sweets and peanuts?
- [ ] More than once a day
- [ ] Once a day
- [ ] Every other day
- [ ] More than once a week
- [ ] Once a week
- [ ] Less than once a fortnight
- [ ] Never

How often do you go to the cinema?
- [ ] Once a week
- [ ] Every other week
- [ ] Once a month
- [ ] Every other month
- [ ] Less than twice a year
- [ ] Never

What were the last two films you saw?

....
....

How often do you buy books?
- [ ] Once a week or more
- [ ] Once a fortnight
- [ ] Once a month
- [ ] Less than once a month

What types of books do you buy?
- [ ] Horror/Fantasy
- [ ] General Fiction
- [ ] Film and TV tie-ins
- [ ] Computer
- [ ] Thrillers/detective
- [ ] Historical
- [ ] War
- [ ] Romantic
- [ ] SF
- [ ] Humorous
- [ ] Non-fiction

Have you any other hobbies apart from playing computer games?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

If 'yes', explain further

....
....
....

Do you participate in sport?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

If 'yes', list your three favourite sports

....
....
....

Do you have a bank account?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

If 'yes', with who (and state type of account)?

....

Do you have a Building Society account?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

If 'yes', with who (and state type of account)?

....

Which of the following takeaway fast-food chains do you prefer (mark 1-6)?
- [ ] Macdonalds
- [ ] Wimpy
- [ ] Kentucky Fried Chicken
- [ ] Pizzaland
- [ ] Pizza Hut
- [ ] Local Fish and Chip Shop
- [ ] Other (please specify)

....
....

Which TV station do you prefer (mark 1-5)
- [ ] BBC 1
- [ ] BBC 2
- [ ] ITV
- [ ] Channel 4
- [ ] Satellite

How many hours do you spend watching TV per day?
- [ ] Up to one
- [ ] One to three
- [ ] Three to five
- [ ] Five or more

Which radio station do you prefer (mark 1-5)?
- [ ] Radio 1
- [ ] Independent commercial
- [ ] Local BBC
- [ ] Radio Luxembourg
- [ ] Pirate

Name ....

Address ....

....
....

Postcode ....



SHOPPING

No soft background music, no deep-piled carpets, no tasteful decor, no dazzling spot-lights, no manicuring shop assistants, just hot up-to-date merchandise, fast service and low bucks, that's TGM SHOP-PING. Whether top games software, high-tech joys-ticks or designer T-Shirts or just simply dustprotective keyboard covers, our TGM SHOP-PING crew will despatch efficiently and fast. The incredibly low prices include VAT and postage & packing. Now go for the TGM SHOPPING spree . . .

TGM COVERS

PROUD . . . of your untouched, virgin-new keyboard? Don't let it bite the dust, protect it from coffee, biscuit nobbles, screen fall-out or just simple plain home-variety dust.
ASHAMED . . . of your grotty, coffee-stained, dust-cloaked keyboard? Cover the mess up and protect your Habitat environment with a TGM keyboard cover.

AMIGA 500 COVER
OFFER 6.00, T001C
ATARI 520 ST COVER
OFFER 6.00, T002C
AMSTRAD PCW8256 COVER SET, (Monitor, Keyboard and Printer)
OFFER 10.00, T003C

T(GM)-SHIRT

STOP . . . being a shy, bash-ful, non-descript grey per-son. It's about time you declare your colours. Stand up to the world and show yourself to be a discerning, forward-looking, fun-loving, pleasure-seeking, adventur-ous human being, in short, an average THE GAMES MACHINE reader. Wear the TGM-SHIRT and join the illustrous mob. TGM replic-ants come in two sizes, MEDIUM and XX LARGE.

MEDIUM TGM-SHIRT
OFFER 5.50, T004M
XX LARGE TGM-SHIRT
OFFER 5.50, T004X



IF . . . you feel under-equipped, grab the order form at the end of the TGM SHOPPING section, fill out the details and send off with remittance (cheque/P/O), or with your credit card details.

SHOPPING HARDWARE



LOAD-IT

Eliminate tape loading problems with **LOAD IT**
Achieves 100% loading success even on the most obstinate tapes.
LOAD IT gives you:
- 100% loading success
- Permanent head alignment adjustment
- LED lights for easy tuning to optimal signal
- Guaranteed for one year

Approved by leading software houses
LOAD IT CASSETTE DECK
OFFER 39.99, T005H

Don't let those aliens get at you – arm yourself with a brand new joystick and save the galaxy

KONIX SPEEDKING

The joystick that actually fits your hand, with a fire button angled for your trigger finger to ensure accurate high-speed action. Solid steel breakproof shaft with neat clicking sound for every precision move you make.
KONIX SPEEDKING
OFFER 10.99, RRP 11.99, T006H

EUROMAX PROFESSIONAL

High durability, rapid response and ultra sensitive movement accuracy from this advanced ergonomic design. Ideal for left or right hand play. 1.5m cord
EUROMAX PROFESSIONAL
OFFER 15.95, T007H

EUROMAX PROFESSIONAL AUTO FIRE

All the quality of standard professional, with the added bonus of the Auto Fire option for when the going gets tough!
EUROMAX PROFESSIONAL AUTO-FIRE
OFFER 18.95, T008H

DYNAMICS COMPETITION PRO 5000 (Normal)

Features arcade quality microswitches, dual fire buttons, robust steel shaft and rubber return for smooth control and longer life. Extra long 1.5m cord
DYNAMICS COMPETITION PRO 5000 (Normal)
OFFER 13.50, RRP 14.95, T009H

DYNAMICS COMPETITION PRO 5000 (Clear)

The designer joystick has arrived! All the features of the Normal PRO 5000 but with the added thrill of its unique see-through casing which offers a tantalising peek at the high tech innards and guarantees no aliens in the works.
DYNAMICS COMPETITION PRO 5000 (Clear)
OFFER 14.00, RRP 15.95, T010H

RAM DELTA

The unusual 'delta' shape allows for either tabletop or handheld alien zapping. Smooth, accurate action, two fire buttons and Auto-Fire should prevent any alien force from taking over the universe. RAM is so impressed with its reliability, they will provide a two year warranty (alien force damage excluded . . .).
RAM DELTA OFFER 9.99, T011H





QUICKSHOT XII DELUXE (NINTENDO)

It's designed exclusively for use with the NINTENDO System and features six positive response microswitches, Select/Start and Auto-fire switch plus stabilizing suction cups. Wreak havoc with the trigger-like primary fire button and the thumb-actuated secondary fire button. It's all in the grip.
QUICKSHOT XII DELUXE (NINTENDO)
OFFER 9.95, T012H

QUICKSHOT XV DELUXE (SEGA)

Dedicated to the SEGA console system, it features six positive response microswitches, Auto-fire switch and four stabilizing suction cups (so you don't get carried away!). Of course, you're not left without trigger-like primary and thumb-actuated secondary fire buttons.
QUICKSHOT XV DELUXE (SEGA)
OFFER 9.95, T013H






HIGHLY RECOMMENDED SOFTWARE

Order any of the highly recommended games below or any other fabulous, current software with our MEGACHOICE special offer facility (details in box!).

THE CHERNOBYL SYNDROME, US Gold
Control the Reactor's system and prevent another Chernobyl disaster. A nail-biting, complex simulation, which proves that nuclear power stations are not necessarily docile power plants. This Sim will get you SCRAMing (or is it screaming?) more than once.
THE CHERNOBYL SYNDROME CBM64 cass,
OFFER 7.99, RRP 9.99, T013C
THE CHERNOBYL SYNDROME CBM64 disk,
OFFER 9.99, RRP 11.99, T013D



PINBALL CONSTRUCTION SET, Electronic Arts
The ultimate pinball design utility. The simple icon system lets you design the most complex pinball game sets, or just simply imitate favourite pinball tables such as SPY HUNTER and SPACE SHUTTLE. A must for pinball afficionados. 'PCS is without doubt the last word in such utilities'.
PINBALL CONSTRUCTION SET IBM disk,
OFFER 11.95, RRP 14.95, T014D





CARD SHARKS, Accolade
Comprising three versions of Poker – five card draw, seven card stud and Hearts and Blackjack – CARD SHARKS lets you gamble against cartoon characters Luigi, Lady Vanderbilt and Milton. For more heavyweight entertainment, try a hand with Maggie Thatcher, Ronnie Reagan and comrade Michael Gorbachov. 'The ease of play, the appropriate reactions of your opponents and greed all add up to make CARD SHARKS a thoroughly enjoy-

able card game'.
CARD SHARKS CBM64/128 cass,
OFFER 7.95, RRP 9.95, T015C
CARD SHARKS CBM64/128 disk,
OFFER 11.95, RRP 14.95, T015D

RETURN TO GENESIS, Firebird
A two-way horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up with parallax effect background movement, RETURN TO GENESIS excels in outstanding graphics, dazzling speed and impressive digitised speech. Rescued scientists provide extra defence weapons such as triple-fire, rear-fire, invisibility/invulnerability, extra speed, smart-bombs and shields. '. . . outstanding graphics make success in reaching new levels very rewarding . . .'
RETURN TO GENESIS ATARI ST disk,
OFFER 15.95, RRP 19.95, T016D



USAS, Konami
Basically platforms and ladders game, Usas has a refreshingly original Japanese style full of intricacies, puzzles and dangers. The two heroes WIT and CLES are drawn cartoon-style and move with precise realism, confronting wonderful monsters with crazy obstacles and weird weapons. '. . . a must if only to find out what bizarre events take place on the next screen'.
USAS MSX II cartridge,
OFFER 19.95, T017R

PREDATOR, Activision
You step into the shoes of Schwarzenegger, leader of a crack team of commandos on a rescue mission in the Central American jungle. Things go wrong and bloodshed begins as the team encounters the Predator, a hunter from another world. A violent action shoot-'em-up with some neat effects.
PREDATOR ATARI ST disk,
OFFER 11.99, RRP 14.99, T018D
PREDATOR CBM64/128 cass,
OFFER 7.99, RRP 9.99, T019C
PREDATOR CBM64/128 disk,
OFFER 11.99, RRP 14.99, T019D
PREDATOR AMSTRAD CPC cass,
OFFER 7.99, RRP 9.99, T020C
PREDATOR AMSTRAD CPC disk,
OFFER 11.99, RRP 14.99, T020D

JET, subLOGIC
The ultimate Flight Simulation program with arcade quality action. Apart from a normal cockpit view, the plane can be viewed from a spotter plane flying in formation, from the control tower, from directly below, from directly behind the jet, from a locked on MiG and from a tracking ground-based view. With the F-16 Fighting Falcon option there are four land-based scenarios, incorporating MiG21, MiG23 and SAM attacks, with the F-18 Hornet option three sea-based scenarios after being catapulted off a Nimitz-class aircraft carrier. '. . . JET is quite dazzling . . . multiple viewing option reveals the speed and detail of the F16/F18 graphics.'
JET AMIGA disk,
OFFER 39.95, T021D

SIDEWINDER, Mastertronic
Graphically superb shoot-'em-up converted from Arcadia's coin-op, SIDWINDER delights with incredible sound effects, immense playability further enhanced by five difficulty levels which can be switched while in play. 'SIDEWINDER is a fun shoot'em-up which, at the price, is a must.'
SIDEWINDER AMIGA disk,
OFFER 7.99, RRP 9.99, T022D

FANCY . . . taking up any of our offers, then grab hold of the order form at the end of the TGM SHOPPING section, fill out the details and send off with remittance (cheque,P/O), or alternatively with your credit card details.



IKARI WARRIORS, Elite Systems
Join the IKARI WARRIORS in the rescue of US general Bonner and battle through the jungle war zone infestated with deadly guerillas, shell-firing tanks and bullet-spewing helicopter gunships. '. . . enjoyable mindless blasting – a constant action shoot'em-up of the highest order . . .'.
IKARI WARRIORS SPECTRUM 48/128 cass,
OFFER 7.99, RRP 9.99, T023C
IKARI WARRIORS SPECTRUM +3 disk,
OFFER 10.44, RRP 12.99, T023D

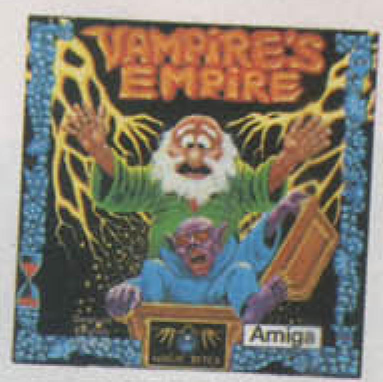


RETURN TO ATLANTIS, Electronic Arts
Offers the opportunity to search a fractal-type seabed for various objects, manipulate them and defeat the clanking crabots which attack you. Excellent front-end with cinematic opening credits.
RETURN TO ATLANTIS AMIGA disk,
OFFER 19.95, RRP 24.95, T024D

SHERLOCK – THE RIDDLE OF THE CROWN JEWELS, Infocom
First of Infocom's new Immortal Legends series, SHERLOCK is an interactive fiction blending plot with puzzle. Take the role of Dr Watson and try and solve the riddle and mistery with Sherlock at your side, with the added bonus of discovering olde London towne.
SHERLOCK CBM64/128 disk,
OFFER 15.99, RRP 19.99, T025D
SHERLOCK IBM disk
OFFER 19.99, RRP 24.99, T026D



VAMPIRE'S EMPIRE, Magic Bytes
Be the guest of the Count, as Van Helsing, and roam Dracula's lair with the ultimate goal of directing the light deflected from the scattered mirrors onto Dracula's casket. '. . . disgusting sound effects and comic graphics . . . essentially running around platforms and ramps . . .'
VAMPIRE'S EMPIRE CBM64/128 cass,
OFFER 7.99, RRP 9.99, T027C
VAMPIRE'S EMPIRE CBM64/128 disk,
OFFER 11.99, RRP 14.99, T027D
VAMPIRE'S EMPIRE AMIGA disk,
OFFER 15.99, RRP 19.99, T028D



AND THEN THERE'S

FERRARI FORMULA ONE AMIGA disk,
Electronic Arts
OFFER 19.95, RRP 24.95, T029D
CYBERNOID SPECTRUM 48/128 cass,
Hewson
OFFER 6.44, RRP 7.99, T030C
CYBERNOID SPECTRUM +3
OFFER 11.99, RRP 14.99, T030D
CYBERNOID AMSTRAD CPC cass
OFFER 7.99, RRP 9.99, T031C
CYBERNOID AMSTRAD CPC disk
OFFER 11.99, RRP 14.99, T031D
CYBERNOID CBM64/128 cass
OFFER 7.99, RRP 9.99, T032C
CYBERNOID CBM64/128 disk
OFFER 11.99, RRP 14.99, T032D
DUNGEON MASTER ATARI ST disk,
Mirrorsoft
OFFER 19.99, RRP 24.99, T033D
XENON AMIGA disk,
Melbourne House
OFFER 15.95, RRP 19.95, T034D
XENON ATARI ST disk
OFFER 15.95, RRP 19.95, T035D

AND MANY, MANY MORE . . .

BUDGET RANGE

ORDER FOUR GAMES IN THE £1.99 RANGE AND PAY FOR THREE (£5.97 PAYMENT TOTAL) – A SAVING OF £1.99!
ORDER FOUR GAMES IN THE £2.99 RANGE AND PAY FOR THREE (£8.97 PAYMENT TOTAL) – A SAVING OF £2.99!
JUST FILL IN THE NAME AND PUBLISHER OF THE FOUR GAMES REQUIRED AND THE PAYMENT TOTAL OF £5.97/£8.97 (DON'T USE THE OFFER PRICE TABLE)

THE MEGA CHOICE:

*APART FROM OUR HIGHLY RECOMMENDED GAMES LIST, YOU CAN ORDER **ANY GAME** RELEASED BY THE MAJOR SOFTWARE HOUSES TO DATE ON CASSETTE,CARTRIDGE OR DISK.*

OUR OFFER PRICES ARE VALID FOR ANY FULL-PRICED GAMES AND INCLUDE FIRST CLASS POSTAGE AND PACKING – NO OTHER EXTRA CHARGES
LOOK UP THE PRICE OF EACH GAME IN THE OFFER TABLE, ENTER THE OFFER PRICES ON THE ORDER COUPON, THEN ADD THEM UP. ORDERS FOR TITLES WHICH ARE NO LONGER IN DISTRIBUTION WILL BE RETURNED.
YOU WILL BE REGULARLY NOTIFIED OF ANY DELAYS CAUSED BY LATE RELEASES.

SOFTWARE OFFER PRICE TABLE

RRP	OFFER	SAVE
4.99	**3.99**	1.00
5.95	**4.74**	1.20
7.95	**6.40**	1.55
7.99	**6.44**	1.55
8.95	**7.20**	1.75
8.99	**7.24**	1.75
9.95	**7.95**	2.00
9.99	**7.99**	2.00
11.99	**9.99**	2.00
12.95	**10.40**	2.55
12.99	**10.44**	2.55
14.95	**11.95**	3.00
14.99	**11.99**	3.00
19.95	**15.95**	4.00
19.99	**15.99**	4.00
23.00	**18.40**	4.60
24.95	**19.95**	5.00
28.95	**23.15**	5.80
29.95	**23.95**	6.00
34.95	**27.95**	7.00

HOW TO ORDER:

WRITE REQUIRED GAME(S) ON ORDER LIST, INCLUDING MEDIA TYPE, COMPUTER AND ORDER CODE (WHERE LISTED).
IF OFFER PRICE NOT INDICATED,CHECK IN AD OR REVIEW FOR CORRECT RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE (RRP).
LOOK UP SPECIAL OFFER PRICE AND WRITE ON ORDER FORM.
ADD UP TOTAL AND ENCLOSE CHEQUE OR POSTAL ORDER OR ALTERNATIVELY USE ACCESS/VISA FACILITY (DON'T FORGET TO INDICATE EXPIRY DATE!).
REMEMBER:
GAMES ORDERS REQUIRE ORDER CODE OR MEDIA TYPE AND COMPUTER, GARMENT ORDERS ORDER CODE OR GARMENT SIZE, HARDWARE ORDERS ORDER CODE. INCOMPLETE ORDER FORMS WILL BE RETURNED.

PLEASE RING (0584) 5620 IF IN DOUBT!

PRICES VALID FOR UK/EIRE/EUROPE ONLY.
FOR OVERSEAS ORDERS PLEASE ADD £2.00 PER ITEM FOR AIR MAIL DELIVERY

DELIVERY:

NOT ALL LISTED PRODUCTS WILL HAVE BEEN RELEASED AT PRESS TIME.
GOODS WILL BE DESPATCHED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. CUSTOMERS WILL BE INFORMED OF ANY LONG DELAYS.

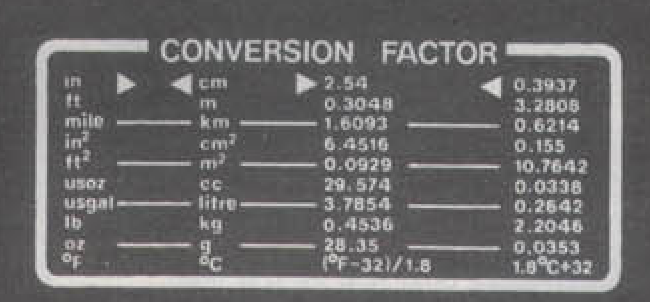
SUBS OFFER

THE MEASURE OF TGM PLEASURE!
No, you really can't measure it. The pleasure you get reading THE GAMES MACHINE pages is . . . immeasurable! Not happy being able to give you only unlimited quality and appeal, TGM SHOPPING officials have come up with a yardstick with which to measure all other magazines except TGM. (Sorry, but rulers are made to limited measures). Subscribe to 12 fabulous issues of THE GAMES MACHINE **and walk away with an unrulable expectation of twelve great things to come in your life plus a measurable length of high-tech ruler-cum-clock-cum-calculator.**
Join the ruling class of TGM subscribers! It's the rule of the day.

RULER/ CLOCK/ CALCULATOR

12"/30cm ruler with flick up battery-operated digital clock showing time and date in hours and minutes (AM and PM), months and days. Solar-powered, removable calculator with full functions, including memory, and eight figure LCD display.





BACK NUMBERS

*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*BA*
*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*BA*
*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*BA*



TX:001 Oct/Nov 87

Light Wars – The Laser Tag Craze! Console Overview! Computers in the Movies! The Robosystem – the presentatition system of the future! TV Gaming – Anglia TV's new adventure game! The Compact Disc revolution! Mel Croucher's Software Sexism! Ben Daglish and Rob Hubbard speak out! Previews! Reviews!



TX:002 Dec/Jan 87/88

Robots in Video! Mel Croucher's Violence in Software! Getting in to Satellite TV! Licensed To Kill – The race for the latest Licenses! Not A Penny More – An adventure story! Robin Candy paints with Degas Elite (ST)! Interview with Stephen Blower, the man behind the Ocean/Imagine adverts! Previews! 38 pages of Reviews!



TX:003 February 88

Coin-Op Confrontation! TGM On-Line – A look at Compunet! Censoring Computer Games! Mel Croucher's Stereotypes In Software! Robin Candy paints with Deluxe Paint II! Low-cost multi-track recorders reviewed! Rob Steel's reviews of new adventures! A round-up of Board Games! Robin Evans's Mercy Dash! Previews! 32 pages of Reviews!



TX:004 March 88

Child Abuse – Ripped off programmers reveal all! Mel Croucher guide to making your own video promos! Digital Pictures, the leading edge in Computer Graphics! John Gilbert takes a look at 16-bit simulations! Coin-Op Confrontation! John Woods on Fantasy Games! Sequencing and Midi! Previews! Reviews!

ORDER FORM

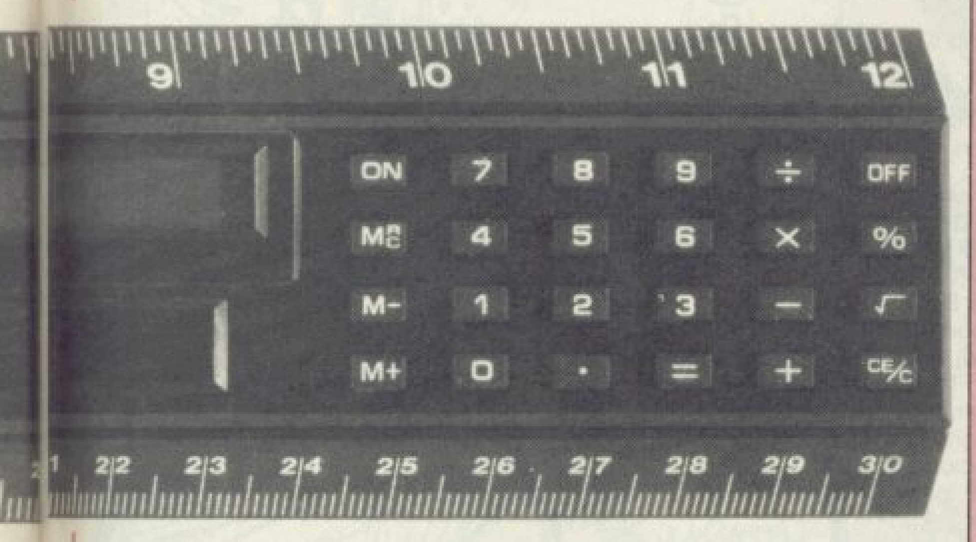
I want to subscribe to 12 issues of TGM and receive my free RULER/CLOCK/CALCULATOR.

Please tick the appropriate box:
- ☐ I enclose £18.00 for a new TGM subscription mainland UK
- ☐ I enclose £25.00 for a new TGM subscription outside mainland UK – surface mail
- ☐ I enclose £38.00 for a new TGM subscription outside Europe – Air mail

EARLY WARNING:

If you wish your sub to commence with Issue 7, we must receive your coupon no later than 27th April 88.

Please allow 28 days for your free gift.



*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*BACKIS
*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*BACKIS
*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*BACKIS

BACK ISSUES £1.45 (Inclusive P&P)

OVERSEAS PLEASE ADD £0.80 TO ABOVE PRICES

SPECIAL QUANTITY DISCOUNT:
Order FOUR Issues and pay for THREE.

ONLY LIMITED QUANTITES IN STOCK. FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED!

Please supply the following **BACK NUMBERS** (Circle required items):

1 2 3 4

The Special Software Discount Offer Prices only apply to recommended retail prices for software, not to already highlighted, discounted special offers, hardware and other goodies. No other discounts may be applied.

CODE	ITEM	MEDIA	PRICE

TOTAL

SUBS TOTAL

BACKISSUES TOTAL

ORDER TOTAL

MY COMPUTER IS:

Please use BLOCK CAPITALS

Name ....

Address ....

....

....

.... Postcode ....

Please make cheques/postal orders payable to **TGM** It is best to avoid sending cash payments. Please DO NOT enclose ANY order with mail to the EDITORIAL side of the magazine as this will result in DELAYS! Send your orders to the address below.

☐ I enclose a cheque/p.o. for £

☐ I wish to pay by **VISA/ACCESS** (Delete as appropriate)

Please debit my VISA/ACCESS ACCOUNT £

Please charge my account No:

Expiry Date   Signature

Access VISA

SEND THIS FORM TO:
TGM SHOPPING, PO BOX 20, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB

GROW YOUR OWN RADIO STATION

Microchip technology is becoming to our century what Gutenberg's first movable type was to the Middle Ages – the great democratiser – and never better seen than in the next generation of radio transmitters and receivers. Mel Croucher examines why the government is having to free our airwaves.

Last month, the London listings magazine *Time Out* was dragged before the beak accused of 'providing assistance to pirate radio stations'. What they had done was to commit the terrible crime of publishing the radio frequencies of Radios Caroline and Lazer 558. It was the first such prosecution under the 21-year-old Marine Broadcasting Offences Act in over TWELVE YEARS, and it is almost certain to be the last. On Thursday, March 10 1988 the case was thrown out of court. The government gave up trying to enforce a ludicrous piece of legislation, and the Department of Trade and Industry's Under Secretary, John Butcher MP, had failed in his February 1 plea in the House of Commons to 'clear the airwaves of pirates'. As from now, the airwaves are fair game for anyone who wants to pollute them.



Once upon a time, when the world was sepia and I was a little boy, before the days of television, the contraceptive pill and sliced bread, the centre of entertainment, knowledge, music, news and fun was the radio, or what we used to call 'the wireless' (because it had lots of wires). In those days, we had a choice of three proper stations and one improper station. The proper ones were The Home Service (I voted for Mr Churchill and love the Royal Family), The Light Programme (I didn't vote for Mr Churchill and love the Royal Family). But let me tell you, gentle reader, it was the improper station that was the mind-blower. It was called Radio Luxemburg, it played rock'n'roll music all night long, it carried adverts, and the jocks were young wildmen with names like Jimmy Saville. Trouble was, the signal was fuzzy, Radio Moscow often nudged it off the dial, and after a few years it became boring.

Then one day in the mid-Sixties a miracle happened. A bunch of loonies set up a radio station on board an old boat and started beaming subversive sounds across the nation all day and all of the night; Radio Caroline changed everything. The presenters didn't give a damn, Kenny Everett, Whispering Bob Harris, John Peel, Simon Dee, Tony Blackburn and friends, boozing on air, transmitting rude words, and waving electronic two fingers up at a government who tried, and failed to ban them. Pirates started sprouting up all over the wavelengths, broadcasting from bedrooms, garages, transit vans, public bogs, and anarchy ruled the waves. It was fabulous, and it was free.

On September 30 1967, the BBC took the only way out. They bought the souls of the pirates, hijacked, and launched Radio One, with Tony Blackburn and most of his legitimated mates. Piracy collapsed overnight as everyone tuned in to the new national networks, and illegal radio went in to cold storage. But things are changing, the airwaves are once again filled with anarchic stations, and the government has admitted defeat. The biggest ever freeing up of radio broadcasting is happening right now, and it will never be the same again. The reason for this can be summed up in two words, NEW TECHNOLOGY. Thanks to cheap microchips, the cost of a radio transmitter with a broadcast radius of a few miles is ludicrously cheap; thanks to satellite broadcasting, the profits from international radio networks are ludicrously high. Let's take a look at the future which has already happened, and start off with the next generation of radio receivers.

RDS: THE INTELLIGENT RADIO

After ten years of research and design, a new breed of radios is being introduced in Britain right now. The functions that these new machines can perform are, in the words of William Shakespeare, bloody amazing. The Radio Data System was finalised under the 1986 Comité Consultif International de Radio agreement, and your new generation receiver will perform anywhere in the world except Japan and Australia. In alphabetical order, here is what it can do.

" . . . the airwaves are once again filled with anarchic stations,"

AF: ALTERNATIVE FREQUENCY SELECTION

Using an on-board RAM store, the receiver makes sure that it is tuned to the strongest signal available for any selected station. And it ain't restricted



to VHF bands, but will switch if it considers that this will result in a clearer signal.

CT: CLOCK TIME

Digital display of UTC (that's what they call Greenwich Mean Time these days), local time, various time zones, day, date, leap year, menstrual cycles! you name it.

DI: DECODER IDENTIFICATION.

A 4-bit utility for decoding Dolby, surround-sound, total stereo split and filtering out all those naughty frequencies that make the family dog wet itself.

". . . your receiver will scan the world for you, and probably commit electronic suicide."

IH: IN-HOUSE DATA

Probably the most interesting feature for the computer-literate, and anyone wanting to grow their own radio station. This feature is provided for the broadcaster's own individual choice of function, and computer-coded information on what is being broadcast will be flying through the airwaves.

M/S: SWITCHABLE MUSIC/SPEECH

A personalised twin-volume option, preset by the user. The intelligent radio is informed if it is broadcasting music or speech, and adjusts its volume according to your instructions. Invaluable to those who wish to cut out all the garbage that is spoken between records.

ON: NETWORK OPTIONS

Nice one. Suppose that you are the sort of person who wants to listen to particular news broadcasts all day, or heavy metal all night, this option instructs the radio to find the program of your choice automatically, no matter which network it is being broadcast on. Say goodbye to those 'it's the bleeding Open University again' blues.

PI: PROGRAMME IDENTIFICATION

A 16-bit block, four bits displaying the broadcast's country of origin, another four to show if the service area is local, regional or national, and then eight bits for individual station identification, with up to 255 individual stations at your fingertips.

PIN: PROGRAMME ITEM NUMBER

Essential for all home pirates. A digital display showing the real-time length of the programme, record track, computer data transmission, etc, how far into that programme you are, and how long it's got to go. Spot on automatic recording is here, regardless 'of cock ups in late scheduling.

PS: PROGRAMME SERVICE

Eight alpha-numeric characters, including ASCII codes, Greek, Hebrew, Russian, (but not Arabic), which will display what you are tuned to, eg: 'LAZER 558'

PTY: PROGRAMME TYPE

Even better than Network Options, this option instructs the radio to broadcast programmes of any particular type continuously. So if you are into Country and Western, your receiver will scan the world for you, and probably commit electronic suicide.

RT: RADIO TELETEXT

A must for all Yuppies; this 64-character display is amazing. It can show news flashes, titles of records being played, sports results and, of course, adverts. Another neat touch is for in-car use, whereby emergency messages will be relayed via a speech synthesizer.

TA: TRAFFIC ANNOUNCEMENT OPTION

A single-bit flag which tells you when a traffic bulletin is being transmitted, and will automatically override whatever you're tuned to, if so instructed.

TDC: TRANSPARENT DATA CHANNEL

An invisible feature, but probably the most intriguing for THE GAMES

MECHANICS. TDC will allow the transmission of computer data, telesoftware and all their little cousins, via the radio, to be downloaded via a standardised port. The connector and signal characteristics are in the process of being internationally standardised as I write this.

TP: TRAFFIC PROGRAMME OPTION

A simple flag, to allow car radios (or household ones, come to that) to be automatically retuned for local traffic information, while you are on the move.

WHEN CAN I GET MY HAND ON ONE OF THESE RDS WONDERS?

The Answer to that is right now, but you'll have to go to Germany for it and exchange an arm and a leg for the new Grundig RDS hi-fi system. RDS machines are scheduled for release in the UK in 1989, and I confidently predict that they will be cheap and plentiful within two years, just in time for the total freeing up of the UK airwaves, and your home-grown radio station. Philips, Sony and the other big league players are ready to roll, and the cheapos will flood on to the market soon after. As ever in the looniverse, these RDS services are in operation at this very moment on all FM transmitters in England, and by the end of this year Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland will be covered.

As we go to press, I am sorry to report that there seems to be a deliberate holding back of these machines in the UK, while the manufacturers get shot of all those crummy music centres, hi-fi stacks and inferior receivers. Manufacturers' schedules indicate that Christmas 1989 is going to witness the big RDS promotions. You read it first in THE GAMES MACHINE. Okay, now let's take a look at which of the big league players are going to tackle the back bedroom pirate broadcasters.

LORDS OF THE AIRWAVES

As of today, there are four BBC networks, almost 50 BBC local radio stations and 46 commercial radio outfits broadcasting in the UK. In the United States their are thousands, and anyone can set up a one-woman or one-man radio station. You go to court, prove that you are not a very great pervert, pay your fee, get your licence, tout for some advertising, buy a few records, and you're in business.

Every poxy small town in the States has half a dozen excellent stations, the leaner and hungrier the better. Over here things are organised a little bit differently. The new Radio Authority is being set up for next year's UK broadcasting revolution, and over the next four years no less than three national networks are up for grabs. Those who have already declared an interest include Robert Maxwell, Rupert Murdoch, Eddie Shah, Capital Radio, Picadilly Radio, and Radio Luxemburg. And if that sounds depressingly familiar, it is. Anyone wanting to be their own Director General simply has to put their sealed bid in an envelope, and the winner will be the highest bidder. 'Loads of munnay!' Radio will become infested with the same old adverts and garbage programming that is churned out of the television, and the pirates will yet again fill a desperate need for alternative entertainment, news, views and adverts.

"Radio will become infested with the same old garbage that is churned out of television . . ."

Timothy Renton is the Minister responsible for this new broadcasting free-for-all, or should I say free-for-nobody-at-all. What do you say Timbo? *

'I think it's very important to see diversity of programming and competitive tendering for ownership of these new networks as going together. I mean, they are two horses pulling this particular cart. *(Pull the other one, mate.)*. 'The bidders must meet the demand for customer taste and choice. Once he *(sexist)* has done that then he will be invited to join in the competitive tender'.

But what does the Minister mean by 'diversity', is Radio One diverse? 'You can't press me on that.' *(* Extracted from Hansard).*

This is a load of old cobblers, of course. No matter what any government mouthpiece says, it will be the same old rich moguls who will 'own' our airwaves.

But one man is not playing the game. In the very near future, that man of many parts, some of which are sheathed in rubber, Richard Branson, is going to try and hijack British legislation by a factor of 18 months ahead of all the competition. He will attempt to dock with Communications Satellite ESC-1, and beam down a brand new all-night national radio station. It will be called Radio Radio (silly silly), and will boast such presenters as Paula (I'm Not A Slut) Yates, Jonathan Woss and the motormouth queen of outrage, Ruby Wax.

What strikes me as hugely funny is that despite this Star Wars technology, what it will actually do is to take us back to the Sixties, and Radio Caroline. Yes folks, among the proposed presenters are none other than Tony Blackburn and Whispering Bob Harris. (Ask yer grannies!). Just like Caroline was a generation ago, this station is going to be hugely successful. And the reasons will be exactly the same. The main reason is that presenters will be given their collective head, and be able to break free of the turgid, rigid, footling, terminally boring music playlists that infest the BBC and IBA stations. But another very important reason for guaranteed popularity is that it will have the exciting flavour of forbidden fruit. Richard Branson is growing his own radio network by using satellite communications, and is completely bypassing the new British Radio Authority. Several recent conversations with local commercial radio stations indicate that they are thinking about sacking their night staff, and relaying Branson's channel.

"Many of the inner city renegade stations are controlled by hoods . . ."

GROW YOUR OWN PIRATE RADIO

The publishers of this magazine in no way endorse any activity which may be outside the law, and have no intention of encouraging the practice of illegal radio transmissions. But if you are thinking about becoming a pirate, here's what you do. A short-range radio transmitter costs from about £100 upwards. VHF transmitters are preferable because they don't need a large aerial, thus there is less risk of your rig being spotted by street patrols. The authorities have for all intents and purposes given up hassling back bedroom pirates.

The only way you will get busted is if you have the bottle to hijack the airspace of a legal station and interfere with their signal. There have been several instances where pirate stations have been raided and the guardians of law and order have come out with broken noses and death threats. And this is the real problem for the would-be pirate. Many of the inner city renegade stations are controlled by hoods, who will get very heavy if a newcomer starts poaching on their territory. There is big money involved, and many of the stations are managed by dealers of certain, er, commodities.

Target your audience. Pirate stations broadcasting games software would have a small but dedicated following. Broadcasts of heavy breathing phone calls are doing rather well in the Chiltern area at the moment. There is a wealth of ethnic broadcasting in several major cities. My favourite is the gentleman in Leeds who plays the same Alice Cooper record day after day.

I like to leave MY GAMES MACHINE readers with some little token of my affection every month, and I had planned a listing of my favourite pirate radio stations. But we don't want to become the second case in 12 years to be prosecuted for aiding and abetting the pirates. So I am happy to pass on to you my specially compiled Radio Station Charts, of the most mind-numbingly boring spots on the planetary dial. Thank you for your attention, and happy twiddling.

STATION NAME	FREQUENCY	BOREDOM RATING	SPECIALITIES
Voice of Greece	9,905MHz	Astoundingly Boring	15,40hrs, dross in English
Voice of Islamic Iran	3,778MHz	Frighteningly Boring	Holy War
BBC Radio Two	Various	Terminally Boring	Patronising drivel
Radio Kiev	6,01MHz	Sadly Boring	Radiation levels
East German Youth	657KHz	Unbelievably Boring	14 hours a day pudding
Radio Afghanistan	9,653MHz	Boring Boring	1900hrs, rewriting of history
Freedom's Banner	WCSN Sat	Toothgrindingly Boring	Fascist hijack of Christianity

A SCANDANAVIAN FANTASY

John Woods examines a Nordic takeover bid in fantasy games and indulges in some gruesome reading from the land of Harn

A long, long time ago in a galaxy far, far away, my *Star Wars – the role-playing game* campaign is reaching a crucial stage. My unfortunate (but unfailingly heroic) young Jedi has been taken captive by representatives of a race of lizard-like masters of genetic engineering, and is being held in a giant sponge-like undersea complex on their homeworld. Meanwhile the rest of the party are speeding through hyperspace to attempt a daring rescue, little knowing the perils that lie in wait for them . . . With the anticipation of the next game becoming almost unbearable, the task of writing this month's reviews is a welcome distraction! This issue I feature two sets of fantasy role-playing rules: a brand-new Scandinavian system and a more established but comparatively little-known one from the USA. Now, where did I put that lightsabre . . .

The MEGA Role-Playing System – Fantasy Edition

144pp Hardback £12.95

Role-Playing Rules
Published by Mega Games Ltd.

MEGA Games are newcomers to the role-playing world, with products based around the Norwegian-written *MEGA role-playing system.* Apparently they plan to release a series of rulebooks using the same basic system and covering all types of role-playing (fantasy), science fiction and so on), plus a range of scenario packs to supplement the rules themselves.

First to be released is the fantasy version of the rules, and the company certainly seem to be proud of it. 'Exciting! Different!' promises the back cover. 'The first RPG of a new generation . . . all of the qualities most desirable to GMs and players'. Could this be the beginning of a Scandinavian invasion of our games shops' shelves? Will the unlikely-sounding MEGA system force the old favourites to look to their laurels? Your intrepid correspondent determined to investigate . . .

My first impressions of the rulebook were quite favourable. The publishers have wisely opted for the hardback format that is rapidly becoming standard for role-playing rules, for reasons that will be obvious to anyone who's ever had a softback rulebook subjected to a few months of frantic table-referencing and rule-checking. The rules are tidily printed on high-quality paper and illustrated mostly by a generous number of scattered pencil sketches, including some of the cutest goblins you've ever seen! Only the lack of an index earns an instant black mark in my book, but this is to some extent compensated for by an extensive table of contents.

BRIBERY

Vaguely encouraged by my first glance I turned to the introductory chapter. This may have been a mistake. The contents ranged from the well-intentioned (a very short introduction to RPGs in general and to the basic concepts of the MEGA system) to the unnecessary (an explanation of the blindingly obvious paragraph numbering system). Also included in this section are lists of ethical guidelines for players and GMs. These include such gems of wisdom as 'Never accept bribes from players'. I've never been bribed by a player in eight years of gamesmastering, but I live in hope . . .

The most important item in the introduction is an explanation of dice codes used in MEGA FRPG. As well as the usual codes – 'd6' to represent a six-sided die – there are 'special' rolls with codes such as 's26', designed to give 'a gradual and floating system of randomness'. All dice rolls are also open-ended, meaning that maximum and minimum rolls have further dice added or subtracted to extend the possible range of scores indefinitely. At least, this is the conclusion I came to after several minutes' study of the section concerned. The rules manage, in a few short but tangled paragraphs, to make the simple act of rolling a few dice sound like a task of Einsteinian complexity. My initial confidence somewhat shaken by this, I gathered all my courage and a bottle of aspirin before plunging into the main mass of the rulebook . . .

COMBAT

Subsequent chapters present everything the good fantasy role-playing system could offer. Character generation is based on the standard system of rolling dice to determine basic character abilities, but there are some unusual additions to the normal range of Strength, Dexterity and the like in the form of Artistic Creativity and Musicality. Obviously a cultured lot, these Norwegian gamers . . . One chapter describes the system for determining these attributes for a new character. This is followed by a description of the various skills available to characters, ranging from Telepathy to Torturing. As in RPGs such as *RuneQuest*, PCs are not limited to particular classes of skills but are free to develop their abilities as they wish. The use of skills is resolved by the GM assigning a difficulty level to the action being attempted. The player then rolls a certain number of dice (the exact number depending on the skill involved, for some peculiar reason) and adds this score to their character's skill level. If this exceeds the difficulty level, the action is successful.

The combat system follows the same general principles, with the defensive value of the target replacing the difficulty level. A successful attack does damage to a specific location (head, chest, tentacle or whatever) giving a more realistic feel.

Four different magic systems are provided, ranging from Priest Magic – granted by gods to their devoted worshippers – to Willpower Magic, where the raw determination of the caster produces the magical effect. An extension of the same skill system is used to determine the success or failure of spell casting. Descriptions of a range of monsters (including the cute goblins), encounter tables, equipment and price lists and a section on previous experience for adventuring characters tie up a book that clearly is trying hard to live up to its promise of 'all necessary information for running a game in one volume'.

Sadly, the confused style of the opening section continues in the rest of the rules. The prose seems throughout as if written in someone's second language, with some very curious turns of phrase ('Many variations of the vampire have been told and here we have one, one which we find acceptable as it is based on reasonable explanations'.) This is a particularly serious problem in the sections explaining the more complex parts of the rules such as the combat system. What turn out, on careful reading, to be fairly sound and straightforward rules are explained in such a hurried and confusing fashion as to make them almost unintelligible. Even worse, there are very few concrete examples of play given, and those there are have dubious relevance.

SOME GOOD IDEAS

In fairness, there are a number of good ideas here. I particularly like the Priest Magic system, with its ideas for how worshippers can gain in standing with their deity by good service, thereby getting the chance of divine assistance. And



the skill and combat system are fundamentally quite workable, though there are pages of headache-inspiring prose to puzzle over before they become comprehensible. But there are also a large number of ideas that seem to have been imported piecemeal from other systems, without really offering the gamer anything new.

All in all the system is exceedingly disappointing, with what I can only describe as a half-finished feel. The system's claims to completeness are let down by some hopelessly inadequate sections – the encounter tables are laughable, and the character background chapter consists only of a number of examples. And both playability and realism are lost in rules that often seem to be absurdly over-complex for what they achieve – the whole system could be drastically streamlined in places.

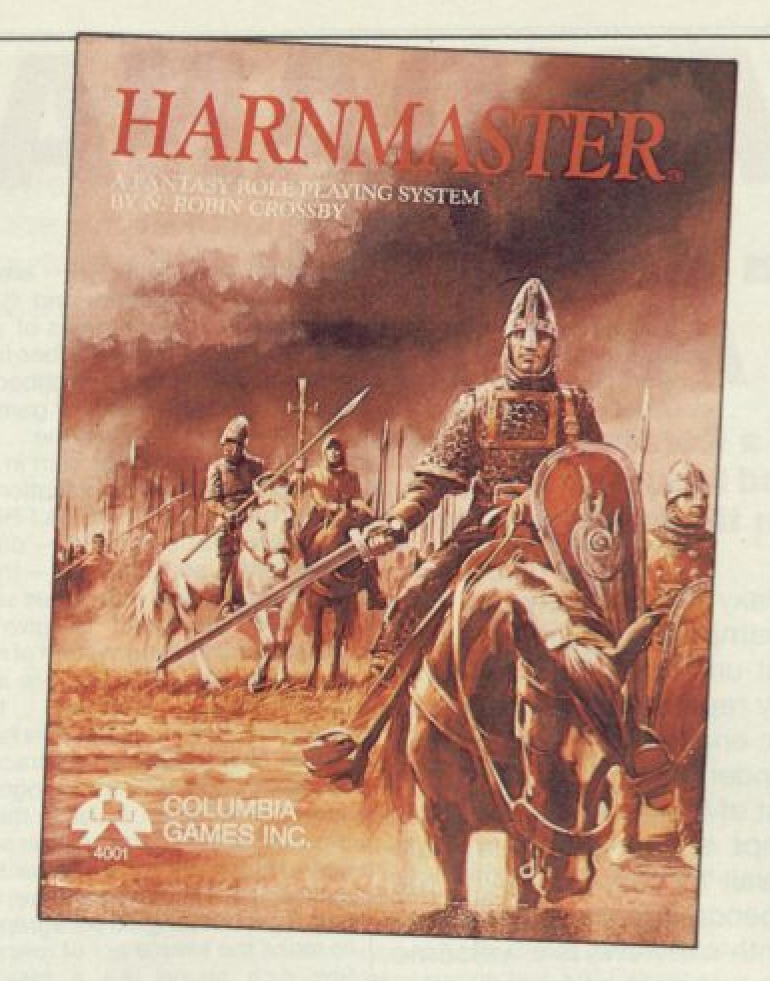
All in all, I really can't recommend MEGA to anyone, especially the inexperienced gamers that some of the advertising has been pitched at. Nor can I understand the motive for publishing a product that is so clearly in desperate need of a complete rewrite. With a great deal of work these rules could form the basis of a reasonable system, but for now I'm afraid all the hype seems to have concealed a real Scandinavian turkey. Buy *RuneQuest* instead.

HARNMASTER

Columbia Games Inc.
Role-playing Rules
140pp Softback £13.50

Harnmaster is not a new game – it has been available in the UK for around a year now. But I make no apologies for featuring it, on the grounds that it is certainly one of the very best realistic fantasy RPGs, and as such is the perfect antidote for a humble reviewer, jaded after fighting his way through the trackless miles of prose in those MEGA rules . . .

Harnmaster is written by N Robin Crossby, and developed specifically for Columbia's fantasy world of Harn. A huge range of background material, maps and the like has been published for this world, so it's an ideal choice for a GM who wants a detailed campaign but lacks the time or energy to do all the work alone. However, there is virtually nothing in *Harnmaster* that is specific to the world of Harn. The rules can easily be adapted to any fantasy campaign setting. The overall philosophy behind the rules is very much to achieve the highest possible degree of realism, and as such the overall complexity of the system is high compared with better-known rules. These are definitely not rules for beginners. But once the basics have been mastered the system is perfectly workable in play.



COMBAT PROOF

The layout of the book has a business-like feel that suits the style of the rules well. The text is clearly set out, with sparing but effective use of pen and ink drawings – many of them serving some specific purpose as well as enlivening the text. The rulebook is softback which suggests it will readily become battered – these are the sort of rules you need to refer to frequently! A plus point here is that the combat tables are provided on two solid card pull-outs, printed in full colour, to reduce at least some of the wear and tear on the rulebook as combat-crazed players check the success of their actions. And best of all is the inclusion of a comprehensive index, a must in a system of this nature.

After a brief introduction to role-playing concepts, including how to roll dice for those of us still confused after earlier reviews, the rules open with – you guessed it – character generation. A total of 32 different attributes are used to describe a character in full detail, ranging from standard physical abilities such as Strength, Endurance and Agility to mental characteristics such as Intelligence, Aura (magical power) and Will to the finer details such as eye colour, complexion, medical and psychological abnormalities – and more. Background details such as a character's previous occupation and family status are also covered here. The rules are concise and well-thought-out, so that after working through the dozen pages with pencil, paper and dice you have brought to life a completely detailed individual. Next you must decide what skills and abilities your new computer will have.

NO SOLO SEDUCTION

Unsurprisingly, *Harnmaster* uses an open-ended system allowing any character to learn any skill. The starting ability in a skill depends on a combination of relevant character attributes specified for each skill. Use of skills is resolved by a percentage dice roll, a player having to roll lower than his or her character's skill code for success. A nice extra touch is that any score divisible by 5 has special significance – either a particularly successful result or an especially devastating failure. Skills increase by experience or training. The range of skills described is enormous, covering everything from the mundane (Ceramics – the ability to make pots) to the exotic (Pyrokinesis – psionic fire control) to the erotic (Lovecraft – seduction: 'Cannot normally be improved by solitary practice'!).

The combat rules run to a substantial 28 pages, though some of this is given over to detailed descriptions of weapon and armour types. The rules are complex but clearly explained, and allow a player a range of distinct attacking and defensive options to choose between. Dodging, missile use, mounted and unarmed combat are all configured into the system in a logical way, and the effects of different types of weapons and armour allowed for.

GRUESOME READING

Most radical of all, Hit Points do not appear at all. Hits result in realistic injuries depending on the body location struck and the weapon used, and these affect the injured character by reducing abilities and by causing shock and bloodloss. Injuries must be treated in an appropriate way to heal – broken bones must be splinted, cuts bandaged and frostbite warmed, for instance – and wounds may become infected and fail to heal properly. The whole makes gruesome reading, and is the most thorough and realistic fantasy combat system I've seen. The extra complexity does slow battles a little, but with familiarity the system is very playable, and with those infection rules players soon learn to avoid combat wherever possible – a very satisfactory situation. Too many GMs and players rely on monster-bashing to the exclusion of role-playing, and it is good to see a system that encourages the opposite trend.

The spiritual side is governed by chapters on religion and magic. Gods will sometimes intervene to help worshippers, the chance of this being higher the more devoted they are. Units of divine favour or Piety Points are given to those who prove themselves by actions ranging from great quests to cleaning out the temple latrines. The sorcery rules are based around the Harnian orders of wizards known as the *Shek-Pvar*, but could easily be adapted to any background the GM wishes. A fairly small range of spells is given, but sorcerers are able to develop new ones of their own by means of research.

FEW BIZARRE MONSTERS

The remainder of the book is taken up by a wonderfully comprehensive pricelist, an excellent set of random encounter tables with cross-referencing to detail not only who is met but also what they or it are up to at the time, a section on treasure and a bestiary. This last section will disappoint those who like a huge range of bizarre monsters, detailing as it does only a fairly small selection, but it gives enough examples to allow the enterprising GM to convert any desired creature to the *Harnmaster* system with ease.

Harnmaster is a system for the purist. Whilst the rules are exceedingly clearly written throughout, they will take time and effort to master, and compared to simpler systems will always require more work and thought from players and GMs alike in play. But in return for that effort, players can come to know their characters down to the last detail, and feel a much greater sense of involvement and realism than would otherwise be possible, and GMs can create a logical, self-consistent and convincing fantasy world. If you enjoy realism in role-playing, give *Harnmaster* a try.

NEXT MONTH
. . . I'll be featuring *Land Of Ninja* – RuneQuest adventure in Imperial Japan, brought to us by the honourable Games Workshop. Until then, keep rolling those dice (if you can find the instruction manual)!

MR POSTMAN, WHERE'S MY GAME?

It's a crime to miss out on Play By Mail – one of the fastest growing pastimes in the country. But getting going can be bewildering. THE GAMES MACHINE tells you how.

A Play By Mail section in THE GAMES MACHINE is long overdue, but rather than plough straight in with reviews of the games available, we thought it better to start from the beginning. Realising that not everybody fully understands PBMs or how they work, we thought we would give this section a different slant by acting as guinea pigs, entering and playing one or more existing games, then reporting each month on our progress (or lack of it). Through our experiences, we hope to better both yours and our knowledge of this increasingly popular genre.

This does not mean, however, that PBM games will not be reviewed, and we should be grateful if any interested parties would invite us to look at their games.

WHAT IS PBM?

The scenario for a game is created, control of which, in the case of the larger companies such as **KJC Games**, is undertaken by a main frame computer. Customers wishing to take part in the game apply, and are sent a pack, which usually includes the scenario, instructions, turn card and a results sheet.

The turn card is used to write down what action you would like to take within the boundaries of the game and the results sheet is used to report on those actions.

A charge is made for each turn taken – usually around 75p – and you are allowed to take more than one turn per sitting if you wish. When satisfied with your orders, you post them to the controller who processes the data and dispatches the results for you to consider your next move (if you are still in the game). This process normally takes around ten days – referred to as a game week and continues until the game is won, you retire or get killed.

WHAT GAME TO PLAY

We studied the Play By Mail games available and decided on *It's A Crime* from KJC Games. Two main reasons influenced our decision; with over 450 players involved in each game, it is very popular – and it appears easy to play without being simplistic.

THE SCENARIO OF IT'S A CRIME

You are a gang leader who controls a group of misguided youths. Your gang is one of roughly 500 which inhabit New York City in the late 1990s.

Your main goal is to control a powerful gang. To accomplish this you must build your turf into one of the largest, and your gang into one of the richest, toughest and most notorious in the City.

Ultimately your quest is to become Godfather, whereupon you are declared the winner and the game ends.

We should have taken our first two turns – which incidentally are free to all newcomers – by the time you read this; next month we shall report on the results.

ABOUT KJC GAMES

KJC Games was established in 1981 by **Kevin Cropper**. From small beginnings it steadily grew, until today, when it is the largest PBM company this side of the Atlantic – unless you are reading this from that side of the Atlantic.

The first game moderated (controlled) by KJC was *Crasimoff's World* – a fantasy role-playing game run entirely by hand. This was closely followed by the popular wargame *Earthwood* – KJC's first computer-moderated PBM game. Their latest offering, *It's A Crime*, is the most popular PBM game in the world, with over 10,000 players. It won the 1987 HG Wells Award, as well as the 1987 CRASH Readers' Award for best PBM game. KJC process approximately 15,000 turns per month at present, although this figure is continually rising. There are now 27 games of *It's A Crime* started, of which four are complete. Each individual game starts with 450 players and involves six mbytes' worth of programs and data.

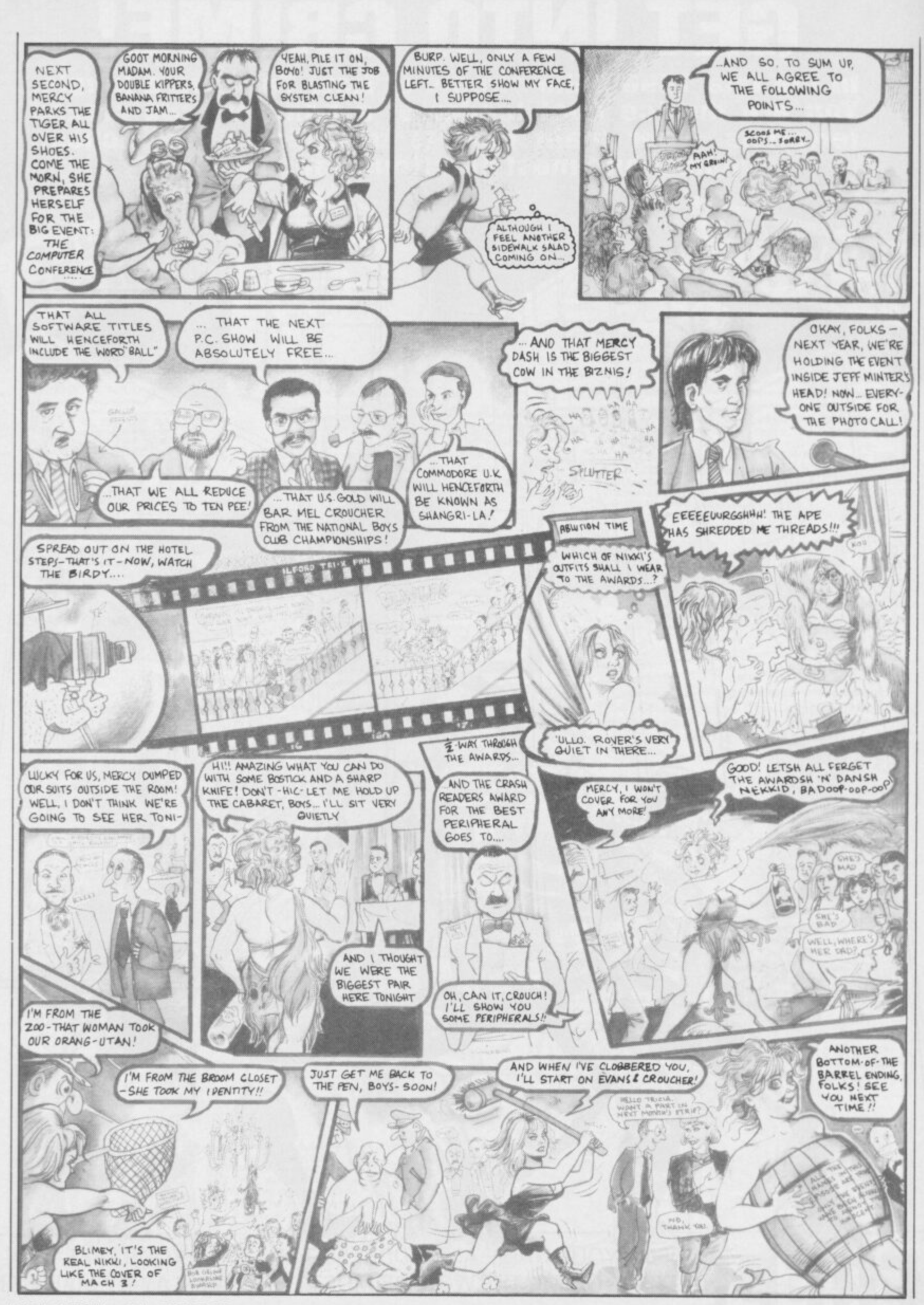
The games are currently run on IBM 20mbyte clones – mostly Amstrad – although KJC are in the process of upgrading. Eventually all their computers will be linked via a network which will include one very fast machine to process the turns – incorporating a 386 chip and a 280 mbyte hard disk for storage – with the rest of the machines used as terminals for inputting. The system should be up and running by the time you read this.

As you can see, KJC Games take PBM seriously.

We are on the look-out for another PBM game to become involved in as well as *It's A Crime* – if you know of one that would suit or you can personally recommend a game, please drop us a line. And keep tuned for next month's first proper game report.



PRESS ANY KEY



NEXT SECOND, MERCY PARKS THE TIGER ALL OVER HIS SHOES. COME THE MORN, SHE PREPARES HERSELF FOR THE BIG EVENT: THE COMPUTER CONFERENCE.....
GOOT MORNING MADAM. YOUR DOUBLE KIPPERS, BANANA FRITTERS AND JAM...
YEAH, PILE IT ON, BOYO! JUST THE JOB FOR BLASTING THE SYSTEM CLEAN!
BURP. WELL, ONLY A FEW MINUTES OF THE CONFERENCE LEFT.. BETTER SHOW MY FACE, I SUPPOSE....
ALTHOUGH I FEEL ANOTHER SIDEWALK SALAD COMING ON...
...AND SO, TO SUM UP, WE ALL AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING POINTS...
SCOOS ME... OOPS... SORRY...
AAH! MY GROIN!
THAT ALL SOFTWARE TITLES WILL HENCEFORTH INCLUDE THE WORD "BALL"
... THAT THE NEXT P.C. SHOW WILL BE ABSOLUTELY FREE...
...THAT WE ALL REDUCE OUR PRICES TO TEN PEE!
...THAT U.S. GOLD WILL BAR MEL CROUCHER FROM THE NATIONAL BOYS CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS!
...THAT COMMODORE U.K WILL HENCEFORTH BE KNOWN AS SHANGRI-LA!
... AND THAT MERCY DASH IS THE BIGGEST COW IN THE BIZNIS!
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
SPLUTTER
OKAY, FOLKS – NEXT YEAR, WE'RE HOLDING THE EVENT INSIDE JEFF MINTER'S HEAD! NOW... EVERY-ONE OUTSIDE FOR THE PHOTO CALL!
SPREAD OUT ON THE HOTEL STEPS – THAT'S IT – NOW, WATCH THE BIRDY....
ILFORD TRI-X PAN
ABLUTION TIME
WHICH OF NIKKI'S OUTFITS SHALL I WEAR TO THE AWARDS...?
'ULLO. ROVER'S VERY QUIET IN THERE...
EEEEEUURGGHHH! THE APE HAS SHREDDED ME THREADS!!!
LUCKY FOR US, MERCY DUMPED OUR SUITS OUTSIDE THE ROOM! WELL, I DON'T THINK WE'RE GOING TO SEE HER TONI-
HI!! AMAZING WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH SOME BOSTICK AND A SHARP KNIFE! DON'T -HIC- LET ME HOLD UP THE CABARET, BOYS... I'LL SIT VERY QUIETLY
AND I THOUGHT WE WERE THE BIGGEST PAIR HERE TONIGHT
½-WAY THROUGH THE AWARDS...
...AND THE CRASH READERS AWARD FOR THE BEST PERIPHERAL GOES TO....
OH, CAN IT, CROUCH! I'LL SHOW YOU SOME PERIPHERALS!
MERCY, I WON'T COVER FOR YOU ANY MORE!
GOOD! LETSH ALL FERGET THE AWARDSH 'N' DANSH NEKKID, BADOOP-OOP-OOP!
SHE'S MAD
SHE'S BAD
WELL, WHERE'S HER DAD?
I'M FROM THE ZOO – THAT WOMAN TOOK OUR ORANG-UTAN!
I'M FROM THE BROOM CLOSET – SHE TOOK MY IDENTITY!!
JUST GET ME BACK TO THE PEN, BOYS – SOON!
AND WHEN I'VE CLOBBERED YOU, I'LL START ON EVANS & CROUCHER!
HELLO TRICIA. WANT A PART IN NEXT MONTH'S STRIP?
NO, THANK YOU.
ANOTHER BOTTOM-OF-THE BARREL ENDING, FOLKS! SEE YOU NEXT TIME!!
BLIMEY, IT'S THE REAL NIKKI, LOOKING LIKE THE COVER OF MACH 3!

INTAKE OF DEHYDRATED CAMELS

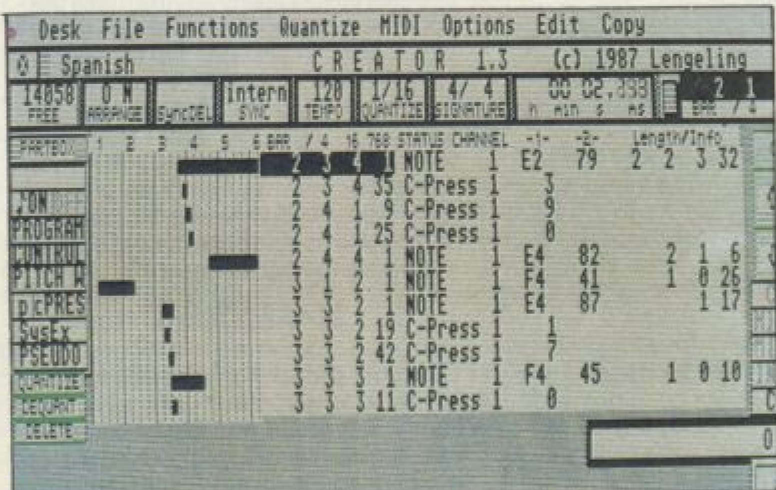
Drink, it seems, is not the great dehumaniser; as Jon Bates discovers, it is Bioquantization that is the problem, and German software house C-Lab is probably most to blame with their best products yet: The Creator and X-alyser.

Whilst feeling intelligent, I came across a fascinating piece of scholarly research that related directly to one of this month's reviews. I have taken the liberty of reproducing extracts from this lengthy tome in your interest.

There is something in the human brain that actually either gets bored with exact rhythm or responds to it by going into a comatose or trance-like state. Recent research at the University of Latvia has proved conclusively that exact quantization of beats has been the cause of much human suffering and loss of dignity. To quote from the recent dissertation, *Bioquantization; a Study* (American Library of Congress Accession no. 5066) by their eminent musicologist Professor Zygote Stoner:

> *'I have observed this phenomena at many beer-houses and places of ritual peasant gathering where the attendants to this ritual have had computer-generated music released at them for periods of up to six hours at a decibel rating of between 115 and 128db . . . they appear tired, listless and nonsensical. Attempts to assess their mental capabilities after prolonged subjection to severely quantized rhythm patterns have proved very difficult . . . the subjects often resorted to base familiarities and threats of violence when asked to participate in assessment games like 'Dingbats' and 'Bingo' (both popular western rituals) . . . I have proved conclusively that this is due to the endless exactitude of the rhythms and is not related in any way to the intake of liquids by the peasants that was observed to be consumed at a rate that related to the intake of a dehydrated Camel (see appendix* xi*) . . . in fact, my research shows that it is the relentless mechanical rhythm that has created the raging thirst in the first place.'*

Well, who can argue with that?



The Creator *from C-Lab*

64-TRACK MIDI

By a complete coincidence, the real-time sequencer from **C-Lab** has some of the best quantization features I've yet to see. Bearing all that in mind, this month's products are both from C-Lab and take the form of a 64-track MIDI sequencer (yes that's 64 tracks!) and a DX7 programmer that blows away all the ones I have seen.

C-Lab are a German software house who have produced several products in the past, notably for the Commodore. Having thrown themselves into the 16-bit market wholeheartedly, they launched these two products around mid-summer last year, and now available in corrected and upgraded form. Both run on the Atari ST series – it goes without saying that you will have a greater memory capacity on the 1040, and a high res screen will reduce eyestrain when reading the small print over an extended period of time.

THE CREATOR

One of the attributes of any decent software is that it should, in my humble opinion, be dead easy to get to grips with from the word go. In other words you can start working with it straight away and then peel back its layers of complexity as you go along – thus removing the need to burn plenty of bedside lamp oil while puzzling through the manual.

The Creator certainly fulfills the first rule as, once loaded, you can record your efforts straight away.

It is a real-time recording program with extensive sequencing facilities enabling the stitching and chaining together of sections with sequenced parts running simultaneously. It works on a process of data hierarchy rather similar to most real-time sequencers except that the amount of control and editing you can achieve is staggering. The smallest unit is called an Event: a note, pitch bend movement or program change etc. These are built up into Tracks: the provision for the musical information relating to one instrument usually on one MIDI channel. Every track can be named, processed, edited and copied independently.

16 tracks on one screen page constitute a Pattern. A Pattern can also be processed in total. When recording, a Pattern or Track can be of unlimited length so your keyboard doodlings can be edited up into something worthwhile. On playback you can solo or mute any Track. There are 99 Pattern pages available and the usual way of working is to allot to each page a section of your piece – verse, chorus, lead etc. However the top level of the hierarchy, the Arrangement section, allows parts to be cut and pasted, chained, overlapped, repeated, moved about, with very easy commands. Because of this it is possible to have one Pattern page just for the drums, which can run all the way through the piece.

This is where we get the concept of 64 tracks; you can have up to four Patterns running simultaneously and as every calculator knows, 4 x 16 = 64, although it is in fact only using 16 actual MIDI channels – there is no provision as yet for assignable multiples of this as on some other sequencers.

IDIOT PROOF

On loading, the screen is split into five main sections. On top are the main global controlling peripherals of tempo, time signature and bar number. If you alter the number of beats per bar, the bar numbers alter

accordingly. Bars are broken down into numbers of beats and fractions of a beat. A small window tells you how much memory you have left, and just to keep things on a real-time basis there is a time-elapse indicator running off in hours, minutes and seconds. Fastidious though this may seem, we *are* dealing with a program that can work with film and video, and your timing here is pretty crucial.

MIDI sync commands are altered in this section as well. Below it are four main screen sections, most important of which is the central Pattern box. You can have up to 99 Pattern pages, each consisting of 16 simultaneous channels/tracks. For easy reference, when you select the MIDI channel for each track you can name the instrument it is to command – very useful when you return to the file at a later date. Down the right-hand edge of this box is a reference column displaying what channel you are outputting on, and also what quantization and edit features – transposition etc – you have made to this Track. To the right of the central window is the Track parameter box.

Now the great thing about *The Creator* is that C-Lab have gone out of their way to make it idiot proof *(no wonder you like it -Ed)*. It is virtually impossible to drop large clangers when you correct any data. Virtually all changes are performed at first by some fast routines that correct the data as it is output. This means that it has not been rewritten for all time – that is until you decide that the changes are exactly what you want. And even if you carry out some sort of editing function you can always hit the undo button reversing the last command you gave it.

ANYTHING MIDI CAN DO

All sort of delights await the intense user: you can format your own MIDI commands and get synthesizers to disgorge their data onto spare channels; to that end it can be used in some senses as a voice store. Commands can be altered so that a sustain on one Track can become a pitch bend on another.

Back on the first screen page, the far-right-hand window is more familiar, with the by now universal tape recorder controls for running the sequencing and jumping forwards or backwards. You can punch-in on a Track and it lets you decide which version you want to keep: your original or the new overlaid punch-in. Segments of Patterns or Tracks can be copied in total or part, specific note values or pitches eliminated, velocity values preset, tracks merged or demixed, and lots of other very complex alterations to keep you amused for hours. It conforms to the full MIDI protocol so anything that MIDI is capable of, this program will do.

I was multo impressed. My only reservation is that although the manual is very comprehensive and fully descriptive, it demanded a lot of my time when it came to really diving into the heavy end of MIDI data processing. I just love step-by-step idiot guides that take you by the hand from novice to professional.

" . . . we are dealing with a program that can work with film and video . . . "

"The Creator offers different styles of 'humanised' quantizations."

"All sort of delights await the intense user . . . "

WEALTH OF DETAIL

All the usual professional type of alterations are available. Quantize from 4 (that's a crochet) to 768 – which is real-time. And as well as transposition you can alter the velocity, if your module/synth is velocity sensing of course; you can mimic the effect of a compressor – this affects the overall ratio of velocity, delay tracks, select a split point, loop a Track etc.

What I found confusing at first is that after the initial ease of getting something down and playing it back, I realised that there are several different ways to approach the main functions, and this wealth of detail can be overwhelming at first; eg: Loop. This refers to the looping of one Track within a Pattern – something you might do for a repeated riff or drum beat. It has nothing to do with the overall cycle control referred to in the right-hand window.

Another minefield at first is the quantization options. Once upon a time (that is, about 18 months ago) quantization was simple. You played your notes in, selected to what note value you wanted them to correct themselves to, and hey presto, a track that was absolutely spot-on. *The Creator* not only does individual quantization for each Track, Pattern or Arrangement, but it offers different styles of 'humanised' quantizations. In fact what this does is to introduce an element of tolerance to the beats. It also looks at other musical criteria besides timing and smooths these out according to an overall average. If that is not enough you can flip the whole screen to the event editor, available in numeric or graphic/numeric versions, and dive right in and alter the individual notes, velocities etc. All the alterations can be heard as you do them and you can shuffle backwards and forwards as many times as you like, using the cycle mode.

X-ALYSER

The other program on the text bench is the *X-alyser*, described as a DX library and editor and DX-to-sample-transformer. Before you get excited, it is designed to work only with the DX7 and not the other models in the DX range. It is compatible with the new range of DX7s and includes the supplementary parameters that the newer DXs have. It also edits any DX7 type of tone module. The bad news is that it only works on the 1040 ST.

As MIDI-madness set in it was screamingly obvious that a prime application was that of visually displaying the editing peripheral of digital synths. Despite claims by a few of Einstien-like ability to cope with the 17-character LCD display on most of the first generation digital synthesizers, I am afraid that, like 99% of the population, I can't retain a head full of figures and instantly relate them in ratio formula to the small section of the sound that is digitally visible on the instruments display. Enter the programming utility with full display of all the peripherals on one or two screens.

On its heels was the realisation that most synths could do with memory expansion when it came to the voice department. Even with some synths retaining up to 256 voices, there comes the problem of swapping them about so that your favourite sounds are accessible easily and not lost amongst the slurry at the bottom of a ROM buffer somewhere. Hence voice library editors and managers. As the DX7 has outsold every other synth there is little wonder at the proliferation of programming software for it.

LOOK, NO HANDS!

The *X-alyser* has a very direct approach. The library is presented in two columns: on the left the one you already have, and on the right the one you are about to create. Voices are mouse-dragged and can be sent to, or pulled from, either the library or DX7. Voice dumps of 32 at a time are achieved in the same way by clicking on the correct screen icon. By the way, the program comes with about 300 new voices, most of which are useful and serve as excellent food for customising. You can check the sound of each voice first as it automatically sounds it on the synth for you.

However the amazing feature of this particular program is that you *don't need* a DX7 to work it! I repeat, this is a DX7 programmer that doesn't need a DX7 – and you can still hear the sound!! How? The secret is the second part of its function – that bit about DX-to-sample-transformer. It has some furious maths routines converting the DX sound peripherals to a MIDI Sample Dump Format.

What? Okay, it's technospeak time.

Recently there has been a standard format implemented for samplers so a common language exists between samplers of different makes and sampling rates, etc. Thus your 12-bit 'ABC' sampler can dump sound via a common MIDI format to the 'XYZ' sampler with 16-bit – or whatever – sampling. This may come as no source of eternal light and joy to you yet but it does mean, as C-Lab demonstrate here, that you can convert any synthesized sound created and edited on a computer and dump it onto a sampler. Wonderful. You can buy a suitable sampler, and use this program to get it to emulate a DX7 or maybe another synth when the software is available.

This could herald the age of the

sampler being almost the only tone module you need. However this also explains why the program needs one megabyte of memory as it takes a couple of minutes to transfer to the sampler. A quick spin-off of this is the *X-alyser*'s ability to access the puny sound chip in the Atari, bypass the sound registers and stuff the sample dump through the digital-to-anologue converter resident in the chip. Got it? Even if this information hits you with all the force of a polystyrene granule, it does mean that you can roughly edit the sounds without having to plug everything in.

SOUND MOUNTAIN

The edit facilities are extra simple to use. You can choose between the full peripherals on display or an Easy Edit page. Easy Edit shapes up the sounds much in the manner of an analogue synth; that is to say Attack, Decay, Sustain, and Release for the sounds's shape or its tonal colour. Whichever page you choose, you can mouse-drag bar graphs, tug sound shapes around, or increment values with the left-hand button. If you prefer, the cursor keys do the same trick. Very quick, very easy.

The program also stores additional data such as performance memories and tuning data. After each alteration a note is automatically sounded on the synth so you can quickly hear the effect. As with *The Creator*, the Undo function button comes to the rescue should you foul up totally.

There is also a three dimensional 'sound mountain' display *á la* Fairlight for every sound. Although you can't edit from this, it is an interesting display of the sound and can be skewed through 180° on either axis. All in all a rather excellent program and one which stands to alter the future of sound synthesis by the use of MIDI Sample Dump. If I thought about it I could get quite excited at the prospect of recreating the sound of individual synthesizers on a decent sampler. It is conceivable that in a few years a form of super sampler will take over from batteries of individual synths and emulate their sound from such a program as this.

Both programs are dongle-protected and won't budge a pixel without the aforementioned hardware inserted in the port. The only other thing to look at is money. Lots of it! Why? Because you will need a fair amount of the folding stuff to get your greedy mitts on the facilities that they offer. What's more, you will need a sampler, or synthesizer, or both. Put you off yet? I do hope not as I would be so bold as to claim that they are worth the pennies that you save up to buy them – Okay, so you've had to do 25 paper rounds a week plus washing cars AND working in the local supermarket to buy these programs. Now enjoy them.

" . . . the amazing feature of X-alyser **is that you don't need a DX7 to work it!"**

Next month, cheaper utilities for the Atari and Amiga, and hopefully the first music software for the Archimedes, plus some answers to your queries. And I am still trying to make room for my list of essential terms that you are dying to know about! *The Creator* costs £285 and the *X-alyser* £111.64 both from SOUND TECHNOLOGY, *6 Letchworth Business Centre, Avenue One, Letchworth, Herts SG6 2HR*. Tel: (0462) 480000

COMPETITION WINNERS



TGM's WIN AN AMIGA (1)

Yes, this was the first of our three opportunities for a lucky GAMES MACHINIST to win an Amiga A500 plus a 1081 Colour Monitor. The response was enormous! First the answers: A = 4, Psygnosis (*Barbarian*); B = 2, Audiogenic (*Impact*); C = 3, Arcana (*Powerplay*); D = 1, Elite (*Battleships*). And the man who has turned 16-bit overnight is Paul Johnston from Lancashire BB5 1SU.

ROAD WARS COMPETITION

Melbourne House had copies of *Road Wars* for the first 20 entries drawn which correctly answered how much it would cost one person to buy all the Atari ST versions at a 10% discount if there were one in eight of 150,000 multi-format copies produced. The answer was £337,331.25. And the winners are:

Michael W McLeod, Scotland KW1 5UT; Guy Everitt, Devon EX21 5XU; Neil Griffiths, Nottingham NG2 7EP; N Langley, Middlesex HA2 6EW; P McEvan, Bradford BD4 0QJ; Paul Nicholls, Berks SL5 8PG; James McGrory, Herts WD1 6QJ; J Skipper, Norfolk NR20 4HD; DB Zecha, Netherlands; Ricky Fenwick, Northumberland NE62 5PL; S D Jagger, Lancs FY7 6TD; J Sholicar, Glos GL52 3DA; Craig Judge, Ayrshire; Jason Brimelow, Manchester M29 0LJ; Aman Khan, Middx UB4 OR13; Stephen Worrington, Essex RM17 5XA; Robert Dean, Essex SS15 5XE; Simon Ashe, Hampshire SP11 6DG; Graham Greenhough, Middx UB3 5LP; Greig Aitken, Glasgow G65 8BB.

ARCANA COMPETITION

Five days of gliding lessons, including food and accommodation were on offer to the winner of Arcana's *Powerplay* and *Marscops* crossword. After training, the winner also receives a year's membership to their local club. And who is it? Why it's **SJ Lee** from Cambridgeshire PE17 1JP. Fasten your safety belt SJ! Ten further runners up each get a copy of *Powerplay*:

ST Clarke, Tunbridge Wells, Kent; G Ross, Oxford OX9 6RU; Martin Hancock, Sheffield S6 5EN; Gareth Rowlands, Sheffield S6 5FD; Trevor Cobbe, Leeds LS6 1RZ; Ross Allen, Brighton BN1 7JQ; Wayne Styles, Bolton BL2 6HL; Simon Wiles, Hants PO7 6PR; S Singleton, Leeds LS14 2HD; M McSwiggan, Guernsey, Channel Islands.

LIGHT PHASERS

Mastertronic asked you to shoot to kill – words in this case, tucked in a wordsquare, with 10 Sega Light Paser guns, the three-game Combo Cartridge and *Shooting Gallery* on offer to the drawn winners. And they are:

Jonathan Williams, Worcs DY9 0LD; Tudor Watson, W Sussex GU28 0PX; Derek Luddem, Stockport SK4 3AA; John Ellis, Leeds 11; James King, Middx HA8 6BE; Tim Dawnes, Kent TN24 8NJ; Gary Morton, 15 Alma Court, Bristol BS8 2HQ; Alex Beresford, Lincs PE12 6AP; Paul Gravett, Sussex BN2 6DF; Patrick Walsh, Slough, Berks.

UNCLE MEL'S TRIVIA QUIZ

Fresh from his personal triumph in Jersey as MC of the Newsfield Readers' Awards 1987 – a three-day stint without sleep – Mel Croucher effortlessly provides another 20 questions designed to enlarge your brain. Only those Persons Renowned in Computer Knowledge could possibly get 17 out of 20 correct. Have a go . . .

1) True or false: Marvin The Paranoid Android got to Number 53 in the charts in 1981 with a song titled *Marvin*.

2) Which programs masquerade as DEAF GIRL, O VILE MAM, BUM CALLS and YE POPE?

3) What event will give British software producers access to 320 million potential customers, on January 1st 1992?

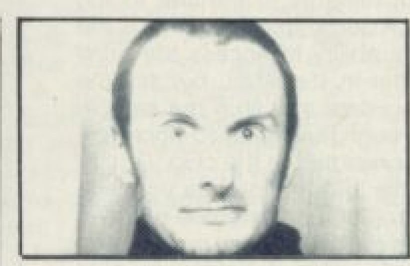
4) What have *Nigel Mansel's Grand Prix*, PSL Distribution and Edgar Allan Poe got in common?

5) How many are Leo McKern + George Baker + Patrick Cargill + Eric Portman + Patrick McGoohan?

6) What does CP/M, CAD, PDS and KINNOCK stand for?

7) Spot the difference between MERCY DASH cartoonist Robin Evans and *Dan Dare 2* villain, The Mekon





8) Who played the voice of The Martian in *Journey Into Space*?

9) How many Californians does it take to program a computer?

10) In which software house were Giorgio Morodor and Phil Oakey in 1984?

11) How many women does it take to program a computer?

12) Which of the following creatures are not associated with computers: mouse, turtle, lynx, dragon, bug, puma, cheetah, codemasters

13) What printers can you find in MAD RATS, O VILE TIT and HERB ROT?

14) Spot the odd one out in the CRL stable: Wolfman, Dracula, Frankenstein, Clement Chambers

15) True or false, the first digital computer was designed in 1822?

16) Who are Richard Bartle and Roy Trubshaw?

17) What is the name of the family featured in *Lost In Space*?

18) How many SDP Members of Parliament does it take to program a computer?

19) Who wrote *Hunter's Moon*? **a)** John Stalker, **b)** Martin Walker, **c)** RUN DMC?

20) What has an overfilled plate, Palace Software and a hole in your tights got in common?

ANSWERS:

1) TRUE, and there is a rumour that he now goes by the name of Morrisey
2) GARFIELD, LIVE AMMO, SCUMBALL and POPEYE
3) THE SINGLE EUROPEAN ACT will abolish all borders and trade restrictions within the EEC
4) They all landed in the pits
5) 14 (four Number Twos plus one Number Six from *The Prisoner*)
6) Control Program for Micros, Computer Aided Design, Public Domain Software, practically anything
7) They are both aliens, they are both green, but Robin Evans's services are slightly cheaper
8) David Jacobs
9) THIRTEEN. One to type in the program and 12 disciples to share the experience
10) 'Together in electric dreams.'
11) ONE
12) CODEMASTERS, computers are associated with them
13) AMSTRAD, OLIVETTI, BROTHER
14) FRANKENSTEIN. He was human, the rest are monsters
15) TRUE: Charles Babbage's DIFFERENCE ENGINE
16) The inventors of the Multi-User-Dungeon
17) Robinson
18) BOTH OF THEM, one to form a splinter group, the other to pull the plug out
19) MARTIN WALKER, the pedestrian's answer to space travel
20) Rimrunner

NEXT MONTH

IN THE GAMES MACHINE!

- **20001 – A MEMORY SPACE ODYSSEY**
  When George Orwell wrote *1984* in 1948, it seemed a long way off. When Arthur C Clark wrote the script for *2001 – A Space Odyssey*, it seemed a long way off. But we've passed 1984 and 2001 is getting inexorably nearer. What will our software be like then? THE GAMES MACHINE finds out for you.

- **IT BITES BACK!**
  Jon Bates interviews a band who eschew Fairlights and prefer to produce their music with the aid of Atari STs – they're called IT BITES.

- **HYPE'S ALL IN A NAME**
  THE GAMES MACHINE investigates the meaning of tough-talking titles and company names – are they a joke or money-spinners?

- **MSX II – THE RANGE**
  Pleased as punch with our new SONY MSX HB F-700B, we take a look at some of the machines now available for MSX II users.

- **AND THE REST**
  Plus personality-crunching Mel Croucher, hot on the trail of some industry scandal, a superb new Amiga art utility, all the latest multi-format reviews and preview news, boardgames, fantasy games and play by mail games and electronic features.

- **Don't miss the next issue of THE GAMES MACHINE! It goes on sale from May 19 at all good newsagents.**

ADVERTISERS' INDEX

16-Bit	87
Activision	36, 47
Byte Back	87
Castle Computers	82
Database Exhibitions	88
Database Software	22
Elite Systems	11
Evesham Micros	64
Go! Software	20, 21, 75
GrandSlam Entertainment	14
Gremlin Graphics	6, 67, 115
Imagine	4
Incentive Software	87
KJC Games	109
Loriciels	54
Melbourne House	42
Midland Bank	2, 3
Mirrorsoft	33
Ocean	53, 62, 81, B/C
Shekhana Computer Services	64
Silica Shop	93
Sub Logic	48
Telecomsoft	61
TGM Mail Order & Subs	97-101
US Gold	13, 28, 41, 78, 79
Verran	84
WTS	87
ZX Guaranteed	64

10 GREAT GAMES II

HOW CAN SO MUCH FUN BE CONTAINED IN ONE BOX?

A colossal compilation of original gameplays and unique challenges brought together in one classic collection of action, intrigue, humour and entertainment. More fun...more excitement than even the most dedicated gameplayer can handle at any one time.

FOR ONLY £9.99 (£14.99 DISK) YOU CAN FIND OUT

SPECTRUM/AMSTRAD

CBM 64/128

THE DUCT
Zoom your way through a network of tunnels in your buggy avoiding the myriad of hazards that race to meet you, beware the Aliens and barriers that move around the circumference of the DUCT.



AUF WIEDERSEHEN MONTY
Lying low in Gibraltar, poor persecuted Monty Mole's whereabouts have been leaked to 'Intermole', who are in hot pursuit.



MASK
Join with the forces of MASK, skilfully commanded by Matt Trakker and combat the villainous VENOM in their quest for domination of the world.



DEATH WISH 3
Modern day vigilante Paul Kersey wreaks his own form of revenge on the scum and filth that terrorise the streets of New York.

JACK THE NIPPER IN COCONUT CAPERS
Banished to Australia, our favourite little horror jumps plane to land in deepest, darkest jungleland. What havoc he goes on to create is limited only by your imagination.



BULLDOG
Blast your way through infinite levels of high speed space action, penetrating your enemies outer defence system to reach and destroy the POLON mothership.



THE FINAL MATRIX
Brave Nimrod, sent on a dangerous and apparently endless mission to rescue other Bioptons imprisoned on the sinister Matrix prison network.



THING BOUNCES BACK
A quick hand and dogged determination are needed if you're to get anywhere with Thing, as Gremlin's springiest star bounces back in a new adventure.



BASIL THE GREAT MOUSE DETECTIVE
Will your powers of deduction be enough to enable Basil to rescue Dr Dawson from the villainous clutches of Professor Ratigan?

CONVOY RAIDER
The free world is in peril, the future of the country lies in your hands, frighteningly powerful weapons are at your disposal and important decisions must be made.



SAMURAI TRILOGY
In an age in which honour was revered, a class of warriors set themselves apart to dedicate their lives to a perfection in combat and discipline of mind that became a religion.





RE-BOUNDER
Armed to the teeth, challenge the might of the meddling overlord, to return to a happy-go-lucky life as a B...B...Bounder.





Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd.,
Alpha House, 10 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS.
Tel: (0742) 753423

Screen shots from various formats.


WE ARE THE
CHAMPIONS
ALL THESE CHART TOPPING HITS
RENEGADE
IK+
RAMPAGE
BARBARIAN
The Ultimate Warrior
SUPER SPRINT
RENEGADE
In the knife-edge world of the vigilante there is no place to rest, no time to think – but look sharp – there is always time to die! You will encounter the disciples of evil who's mission it is to exterminate the only man on earth who dares to throw down the quantlet in their path – the Renegade. PLAY RENEGADE...PLAY MEAN!
Licensed from ©Taito Corp., 1986.
IK+
They called International Karate 'the greatest Karate beat 'em up yet' (Commodore User). And who are we to argue? But ARCHER MACLEAN has come up with a stunner: A third fighter. An amazing animated background. New moves (including double head-kick and a spectacular backflip). Re-mixed music by ROB HUBBARD. And balls!
©1987 Archer Maclean ©1987 System 3 Software Ltd.
SUPER SPRINT
Licensed from Atari Games' original money-spinning coin-op, one or two players compete head-to-head over eight gruelling tracks and four levels of game difficulty. Avoid the hazards and collect golden spanners to enhance custom car features – the key to Super Sprint. With detailed animation and sound effects, Super Sprint brings the best driving excitement ever to be experienced on home computers.
TM & © Atari Corporation 1986. All Rights Reserved. ©Electric Dreams Software 1987
RAMPAGE
The game where the nice guys don't get a look in.
Grab your way through Chicago, punch up New York, and jump on San Francisco. Three indescribably nasty characters which bear a remarkable likeness to King Kong, Godzilla and Wolf-man, need you to send them on a rampage in an enduring 150 days of destruction, through 50 different cities.
TM & ©1986 Bally Midway MFG. Co. All rights reserved. Activision Inc.
BARBARIAN
THE STORY SO FAR...
The evil sorcerer Drax has sworn to wreak an unspeakable doom on the people of the Jewelled City unless Princess Mariana is delivered to him. However, he has agreed that if a champion can be found who is able to defeat his demonic guardians, the Princess will be released. From the wastelands of the North, comes an unknown barbarian, a mighty warrior, wielding his broadsword with deadly skill. Can he vanquish the forces of Darkness and free the Princess? ONLY YOU CAN SAY...
©Palace Software 1987
AMSTRAD
COMMODORE
SPECTRUM
IN A SINGLE GIANT PACK
ONLY
£9.95
ocean
OUT NOW!